



THE CHIEF SCOUT

SIR ROBERT BADEN-POWELL

K.C.B., K.C.V.O., LL.D.

Ins Baden Powell

If we go forward we die,
If we go backward we die
Better go forward and die.

GENERAL BADEN-POWELL'S AUTOGRAPH FROM AN ALBUM

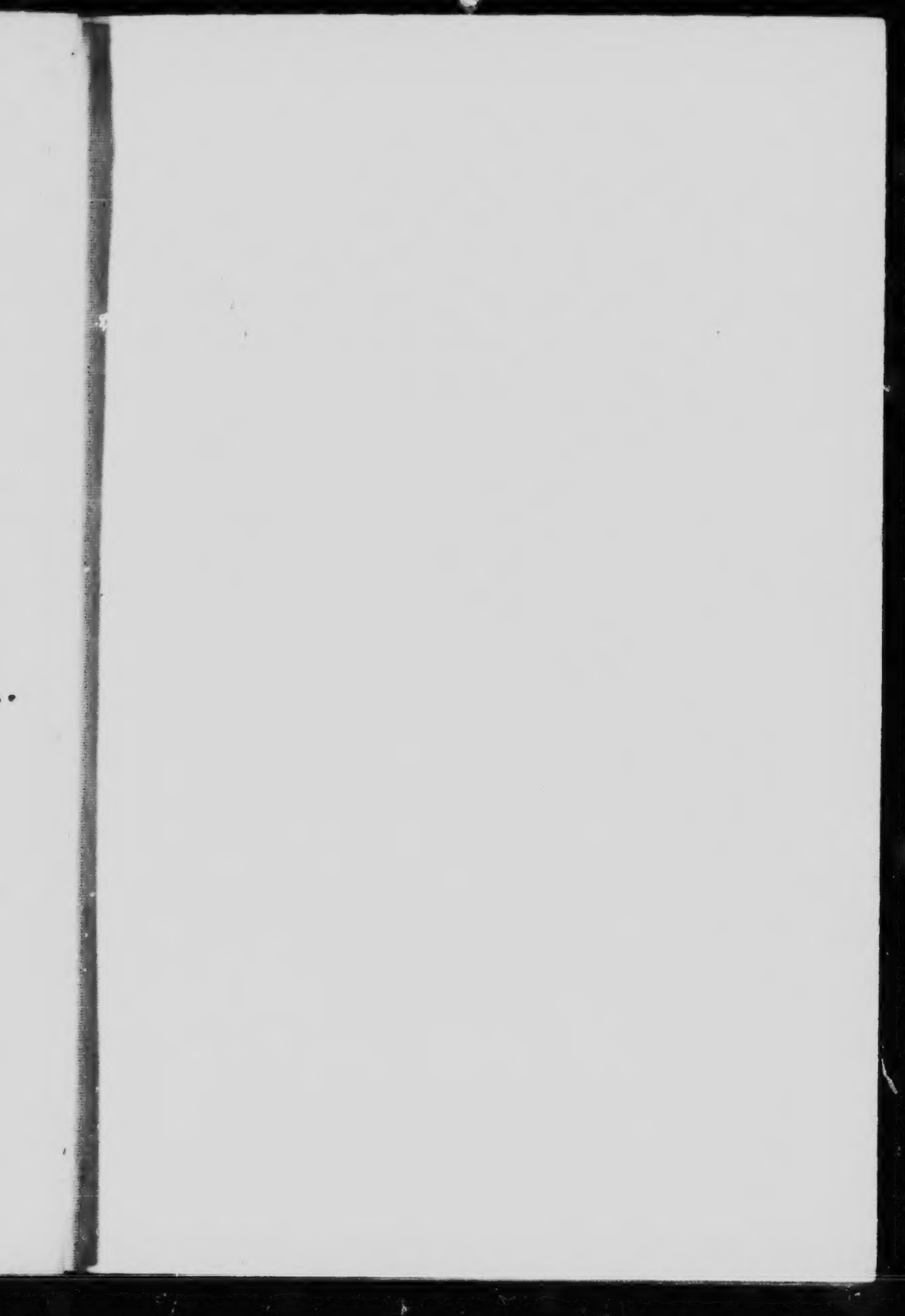




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[Fanny Ke.

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A CAMP-FIRE YARN

BY

W. FRANCIS AITKEN

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY'S LIFE OF GREATHEART LINCOLN"

WITH PORTRAIT AND ILLUSTRATIONS

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CHAPTER I

Mézières and Mafeking—A Remarkable Family—"B.-P.'s"
Childhood—The Boy the Father of the Man—Departure
for the East.

IN the early days of the great Boer War, when "the graves of the household" were beginning to be scattered over the African veldt, the one gleam of hope came from a little scrap-heap of a town on the Molopo, which our Chief Scout, with a garrison of barely a thousand men, including only some seven hundred trained to the use of arms, was holding against about twelve thousand of the enemy (now our good friends and fellow-subjects). He kept the besiegers and their successive generals at bay from the 13th of October, 1899, till the 17th of May, 1900, a period of two hundred and seventeen days—and nights.

Those among you who want to read the best story of that memorable time should secure "The Siege of Mafeking," by Major F. Baillie. Meanwhile, it will interest you if I just mention here, in passing, that Boy Scouts played an important part in the defence. True, they were but a small force compared with the three hundred thousand or more who are now "scouting" for good citizenship all over the globe.

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But they have their place in history with Alfred, the noblest of the grandsons of Egbert; and with the many intrepid frontiersmen, bushmen, trappers, explorers, and missionaries who have helped to make the Empire great and strong, and the name of Briton a synonym for courage, endurance, and self-denial.

When the Chevalier Bayard, the French knight "without fear and without reproach," in the early days of the sixteenth century, was consulted by his sovereign Francis I. as to the defence of Mézières, and it was suggested that this little town on the Meuse should be burnt and the country around devastated on account of its weakness, he said to the King, "Sire, no place is weak where there are men capable of defending it." And with only two thousand men and no artillery he held Mézières against the Count of Nassau and forty thousand troops and one hundred guns. It is recorded that the Spanish commander, on being scornfully asked how it came to pass that, with such a host at his disposal, he failed to take "a crazy pigeon-house" like Mézières, he replied, "Because there was an eagle in it!" So might the Boer generals have answered President Kruger.

The Chief Scout had passed his fortieth year when his great opportunity came. Let us see how he "prepared" for it. You will have to light more than one camp-fire before the story is told. Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell (pronounced Bayden-Poël) is one of our few really great Londoners. He was born at 6 Stanhope Street on 22nd February, 1857, the year of the Indian Mutiny. He belongs to a family every member of which has made some mark in the world. His father, the Rev. Professor Baden Powell (the name was not "hyphenated" until recent years), was a distinguished scholar and scientist; his mother, the exceptionally gifted elder daughter of Admiral William H. Smyth, naval surveyor, astronomer, and

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antiquary. Admiral Smyth was a descendant of the famous Elizabethan captain who preserved the colony of Virginia, and, in addition to innumerable other adventures, was captured by Indians when exploring the Chickahominy, and brought before the chief Powhatan, being rescued twice from a cruel death by Pocahontas, the chief's young daughter.

Of Robert Baden-Powell's brothers, Sir George Baden-Powell, who died in 1898, was Sir Charles Warren's right-hand man in the negotiations between Great Britain and the Transvaal in 1885; and was adviser to the British Government in the Behring Sea controversy in 1893. Major B. F. S. Baden-Powell, formerly of the Scots Guards, has made a great study of military ballooning. Mr. Henry Warington Smyth Baden-Powell, after serving in the Royal Navy, took up the practice of the law, and won distinction as a barrister. Mr. Frank Smyth Baden-Powell has combined skill at the Bar with prowess in art and athletics, having exhibited many works at the Royal Academy in London, the Salon in Paris, and many other galleries. The Chief Scout's only sister, Miss A. S. Baden-Powell, has proved herself hardly less versatile than her brothers in the pursuit of art, music, languages, astronomy, and the study of natural history.

The last thing thought of by the Professor and his wife, in the early training of their children, was book-learning. The first "schooling" of these happy young people was in the open air: in the quest of rare plants and flowers and butterflies; in becoming familiar with the names and foliage of the trees, the notes and plumage of birds, the habits of animals and fishes, and the signs of the zodiac—all to be discussed at the mother's knee.

As godfather, Robert had no less a personage than Robert Stephenson, the great engineer; hence, doubtless, his earliest ambition, which was to be an

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engine-driver. When he was only four years old (and his mother but thirty-three), little "Ste.," as he was called in the family circle, met with his first real sorrow in the death of his father. Mrs. Baden-Powell pursued single-handed the course of training that had been adopted heretofore, so successfully that men like Ruskin and Thackeray wondered how she managed to keep her growing family under such perfect control. The "secret" was mutual love. Sometimes, it is true, she confessed to being a little puzzled. "Ste." developed a capacity for drawing with his left hand. His mother asked Ruskin what she should do. The great art critic looked over the boy's sketches, and then said bluntly, "Let him draw as he likes, ma'am." And so it was that "Ste." became what is called ambidextrous, able to use both hands with equal facility.

In those early formative years Robert gradually but surely learned the invaluable lessons of self-reliance. Before he was three he could dress and undress himself without assistance. At five he was able to keep an account of his expenditure. Almost as soon as he could walk he began to learn to ride. He began, too, to be a scout. Nothing pleased him better than to wander in the woods near his grandfather's home near Tunbridge Wells, unless it was, in company with his young companions, to climb to the topmost boughs of a tall tree, with hampers and hay, and there, in the full enjoyment of the delightful and time-honoured game of "Let's pretend," to imitate the habits of the birds. We get other glimpses of him digging miniature trenches in the sands of Bonchurch in the Isle of Wight; and sailing round the coasts, or exploring inland waters in a "home-made" yacht or boat, in the company of his elder brother, Henry Warrington. Thus boyhood slipped away until, in his twelfth year, "Ste." was sent to a preparatory school, whence, about a

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year later, with his younger brother, B. F. Smyth Baden-Powell he was drafted to the school of Ellenborough and Havelock, Thackeray and Bowen, and others of England's notable men—the Charterhouse.

Robert Baden-Powell is not likely to forget what he owes to the late Rev. Canon Haig-Brown, LL.D., and the Charterhouse School. The present writer remembers seeking the Doctor in his old-world sanctuary at Smithfield and asking him if Robert Baden-Powell was especially distinguished in any particular branch of school work. The answer was, "No, sir; he could do anything he tried to do."

Robert Baden-Powell entered the Charterhouse in January, 1871. The bright intelligence and cheery frankness which he showed during the ordeal of the preliminary examination created at once a favourable impression on the head master. "That impression," said Dr. Haig-Brown, "was never falsified. From the first he showed an exuberant joyousness, but I cannot recall any incident in which this betrayed him into want of respect for his masters or lack of consideration for his schoolfellows. He became at once a popular boy. This popularity grew as he gave evidence of the many accomplishments he possessed—a singular power of mimicry, a remarkable facility in drawing," evidence of which remains in the files of *The Grey Friar*, the school magazine to which he was a valued contributor. "Taking one pen in the right hand and another in the left he could draw two pictures simultaneously. His sketches were beautiful—not, perhaps, evidences of art training, but actual reality. When he had been at the school about two years the removal was made to Godalming. In the somewhat trying circumstances of this removal he proved most useful. He showed remarkable intelligence and liberality of feeling—most boys are so conservative by nature—helping to

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smooth over the difficulties involved in the change to the new place; and taking up every school institution which was new. He was by nature a born leader of boys as he has since become of men. His progress in school work was steady and continuous."

Entering the school by a low form, in his third year he was in the sixth. As a senior "he was well known for the considerate help he gave to young and inexperienced boys in their early trials." There was no school institution which did not receive active and valuable support from him. The traditions of no other public school could have been more in harmony with his temperament.

As in work so in play, Robert proved thorough, attacking his pastimes in a characteristic way. At Godalming the boys had the run of a delightful country; so that his early bent towards woodcraft received no little encouragement. In athletics he greatly distinguished himself. For some time he kept goal for the football team. In a record dated 1876, the year in which he left school, it is observed of him that he was a good goal-keeper, "keeping cool and always to be depended on." And the goal, we are told by those who recollect those days, when the playing fields of Godalming were rivalling those of Eton, was a roadstone to a crowd of admiring youngsters. For their delight "Good Old Bathing Towel"—as he was affectionately nicknamed—busied his fertile wits when these were not immediately concerned in forestalling the assaults of the opposing team. At critical periods in the game he was wont to give utterance to a lusty yell which had no little effect in disconcerting the attacking party. He rendered great assistance, too, in the formation of the school Rifle Corps.

When in 1874 the school first competed at Wimbledon in the Public Schools competition for the Ashburton Shield, "Private R. S. S. Baden-Powell" took eighth position in the Charterhouse

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team. A year later, when he again took his place in the team, he had risen to the rank of "Corporal." Where are the members of those teams and others of "Old Bathing Towel's" schoolfellows to-day? So far as can be ascertained the Charterhouse School was represented at the front during the awful Boer War by no less than 226 Old Boys.

Bacon said that play-acting was one of the best means of educating children. It has formed part of the curriculum of all our great schools and colleges. Those who have read about the early days of Queen Victoria's family will remember how much importance was attached by her to the educative influences of private theatricals. Long before he went to the Charterhouse, "Ste." could not only act, he wrote what have been described as the funniest of little plays for home production. And he carried the double gift into his school life.

In the *Era* of 19th May, 1872, in a notice of a performance of "To Parents and Guardians," given at Charterhouse School, the following remarks are made:—"R. S. S. Baden-Powell was full of vivacity and mischief as Bob Nettles." Bob, it should be explained, is represented as sticking cobbler's wax on the schoolmaster's breeches.

One of Robert Baden-Powell's house-masters observed that he was "just the kind of boy of whom there would be few anecdotes to record." But two stories told by Dr. Haig-Brown are well worth chronicling here. "On one occasion," said the Doctor, "we had a master who was somewhat shy, and who had contracted a habit of frequently saying to the boys, when they approached him on any matter, 'Don't you see I'm engaged?' After a time it was whispered, to the interest of all, that his affections had really become engaged. The news got to Baden-Powell, who, on pretence of asking some question, approached the master. The latter, from

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force of habit, looked up and said, 'Don't you know that I am engaged?'" Dr. Haig-Brown went on to tell how "B.-P.," in that inimitable mimetic way of his, simply ejaculated, "Oh, sir!" The result may be better imagined than described.

The other story shows how ready the Chief Scout was, even as a lad, to "save the situation" in any predicament. "On one occasion when a school entertainment was in progress, a performer 'scratched' at the last moment. The boys were beginning to get somewhat impatient at the long pause, so," added Dr. Haig-Brown, "I said to Baden-Powell, who was sitting next to me, 'We must do something. Cannot you fill the gap?' He immediately consented, and, rushing on to the platform, gave them a bit of his school experiences. Fortunately, the French master was not present, for he described a lesson in French with perfect mimicry. It was inimitable. It kept the boys in perfect roars of laughter."

To which reminiscences may be added one told by Mr. Harold Begbie in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. "Some years after he had left school, Baden-Powell happened to visit Charterhouse on the evening of an entertainment. The funny man failed to turn up, and Baden-Powell was pressed into service. Among his performances he described an 'At Home,' to which he had been in London, and where he found himself announced as Mr. Bread-and-Fowl. He told how he picked out the only respectable man present as his host, shook hands with him, and found it was the butler. The recital of that adventure, with innumerable comic details, lives in Charterhouse to this day, and the funny man who did not turn up is forgiven."

Carthusians, past and present, did not forget their old schoolfellow in the dark days of the South African war, as details of the Mafeking Relief Fund which they raised bear witness.

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In May, 1876, Baden-Powell paid a visit to Balliol College, Oxford, and was put through an informal examination by the late Professor Jowett, who expressed the opinion that he was "not quite up to Balliol form." "This opinion," said Dr. Haig-Brown to the present writer, "shook my faith in Jowett's judgment of men."

As a matter of fact, Dr. Jowett's reason for discouraging Baden-Powell's entry at Balliol was based on the view that, his career having been decided upon, he would not be able to devote to University studies the three or four years looked upon by the Master as necessary, having regard to the traditions of the College. Several members of the Baden-Powell family had been to Balliol. Sir George Baden-Powell carried off the Chancellor's prize in the year that his brother Robert saw Dr. Jowett.

In view of Dr. Jowett's decision, Dean Liddell, himself an old Carthusian, arranged that Robert should, in October, have rooms at Christ Church. However, before that plan could be carried into effect, there was, in July, in London, an open examination for direct commissions in the army; and as Baden-Powell had decided upon a military career, he became a candidate. He had no special preparation—no "cramming," and the fact that of 718 candidates he came out fifth, being second for the cavalry, is in itself an interesting comment on the verdict of the Master of Balliol as to his "form." Gazetted on 4th September, 1876, a sub-lieutenant of a "crack" cavalry regiment, the 13th Hussars, with his commission antedated two years, in consideration of his position on the "pass" list, he sailed forthwith for the East on the eve of two memorable events—(1) the proclamation of the Queen as Empress of India, and (2) our first annexation of the Transvaal.

CHAPTER II

In India—A new Pied Piper—An Ideal Regimental Officer—
Asceticism and Subtlety.

THERE is a temptation to dwell on that voyage to India taken by the young lieutenant of Hussars in 1876. But the story, to be told well, would need to be told by the traveller himself. For the present it remains in the diary which he illustrated and sent home to his mother, and which we may be sure is among her most treasured keepsakes.

In the meantime, save by reading between the lines of the Chief Scout's published writings, and by scanning the brief official records of his "steps" in the service, and by digesting the "gup" that has grown round his name and has come to be more or less apocryphal, none except relatives and intimate friends, and those who have served with him, can know by what processes, in Britain's great dependency, he qualified himself for the brilliant service he has rendered to his country since.

India, in the words of the late Sir Alfred Lyall, is "the land of regrets." Another has described Africa as "the grave of reputations." As to "regrets," these come inevitably to the thoughtful Englishman in the East. They find an echo in Baden-Powell's first big book, though that be one on a professedly light topic—sport. As to "the grave of reputations"—the phrase as given may not be a perfect quotation, but the sense is clear enough—what may be the grave of one man is destined to be but the test of another.

In India and in the Colonies European child-life

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has an infinitely more pathetic aspect than is the case at home. The "may be" is so near to the "might have been." As Sir William Hunter has written, "The price of the British rule in India has always been paid in the lives of little children." In many of the Colonies nature has for the little ones compensation that is not found in the East.

Thackeray, who lost his father when he was four years old, and whose mother's influence remained with him through life, was always devoted to children. And no less so is the Chief Scout. The story of the manner in which he signalised his arrival in India may have in it some slight element of picturesque exaggeration; but one can quite believe it true in the main, for it is in perfect keeping with all we know of him. We are told that he marshalled all the European children he could find and marched them up and down the streets of Old Lucknow to a merry tune, played with considerable feeling by himself on an ocarina! He had prepared for this sort of thing and for more serious effort whilst helping the "youngsters" in far-away Godalming.

So far as the official record given in *The Army List* of Baden-Powell's services in India goes, the Red Book but repeats what Dr. Haig-Brown said of his favourite pupil's career at school. It is a record of "steady and continuous progress."

Gazetted a lieutenant in the 13th Hussars on 11th September, 1876, Baden-Powell, who quickly distinguished himself in topographical and musketry work, was promoted to be adjutant of his regiment on 1st April, 1882. Taking the rank of captain in the following year, he continued adjutant till 17th February, 1886.

The Duke of Connaught, speaking at a gathering on behalf of the Boy Scout movement in January, 1911, referred to Sir Robert as "an old friend." "We served in India twenty-eight years ago," he

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said, "and I am sure a man who was as good an adjutant as he was, is certain to make an excellent head of an organisation requiring such careful management as this one does."

Baden-Powell made an ideal regimental officer. Few but military men have anything like an adequate idea of the trying duties of an adjutant. Suffice it, for the understanding of what follows, that the sergeants of a regiment are peculiarly qualified to judge the adjutant. "Some sergeants in the 13th Hussars were once asked if the men liked 'B.P.' After a pause one of them said, hesitatingly, 'Like him? Well, I shouldn't say they like him'; then, in a burst, 'Why, they worship him.'" And this feeling, we are told, was prompted not by any leniency or coddling, but by the adjutant's tireless devotion to the service, and by his faith in the intelligence and good sense of the men.

During the term of his service in India the Chief Scout had some opportunity of studying the graver questions associated with British rule. The year 1877, in which Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress, is also to be remembered as a grievous famine year. There arose during the periods of office of Lord Lytton, Lord Ripon, and Lord Dufferin, serious questions as to the liberty of the press, native disaffection, and Russian activity; and then there was the Afghan war.

The "gorgeous East" has other lessons for us than those of luxury—lessons in addition to those enumerated by Max Müller in his Oxford lectures, "What can India Teach Us?" It is the home of asceticism, the birthplace of "the art of going without and doing without." Baden-Powell learned this art thoroughly—as if in preparation for Maskeking. His old master said of him "he was always preparing"; and he acquired in India a quite remarkable power of going for long periods without food, sleep,

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or rest of any kind. An officer under whom he served has written of him: "I have always considered him without exception the most indefatigable, hard-working officer I have ever come across; ready at any moment to undertake any duty, however arduous. . . ." He is an enemy of over-indulgence in any form—if we except work. If he has ever felt contempt for any living thing the feeling must have been aroused by some spectacle of gluttony, selfishness, or sloth. One soon finds him regretting the selfishness and nomadic nature of much of European life in India. He has drawn a striking picture of that lazy *bon vivant*, the old boar who favours the crops of sugar-cane. These crops stand about twelve months from sowing to cutting; "and so a boar, on coming into residence, has at least nine months of quiet ease before him without any necessity to move a yard in search of food." It is a difficult matter to persuade the boar to come out. "He knows how unprepared he is in wind and limb for a race for life across country, and so long has he been a stay-at-home that he cannot be certain that his former distant places of refuge can still be found: like the Taquir's description in Igd-i-Gil, he is—

"' . . . void of wisdom,
Being o'erfilled with food, even to the nose.' " *

If Baden-Powell is not a teetotaller, he must be almost one. It is a matter of fairly common knowledge that he eschews tobacco. It may not be known generally that since the days of the siege of Mafeking he has been a vegetarian.

* "Pig-sticking or Hog Hunting." Harrison, 1889.

CHAPTER III

Pig-sticking—A Revelation of Character—Winner of the Kadir Cup—The Charms and Utility of "Pugging"—Play-acting under Difficulties—A Narrow Escape.

THE Chief Scout's book on "Pig-sticking" is worth study for more than one reason. It is a wonderful revelation of character, as well as a standard guide to one of the finest branches of sport in the world. In the first place he goes straight for his subject, leaving its antique aspect to others. He gives you the results of his study and his experience adapted to the needs of the present. Only those who have gone over the same ground will appreciate the pains he has taken to classify his material. He is practical and orderly in his thinking; but he makes you feel that he sees what lies beyond—the point of ultimate utility. In play-acting this is the maximum of fun or entertainment to the onlooker. In sport it is the effect on the sportsman, and through the sportsman on the profession to which he belongs, and those with whom he has been thrown into contact whilst pursuing that profession, and on the national interests that profession exists to serve.

Baden-Powell's pages are full of a love for outdoor life. The writer is obviously one to whom the world is a great school: to whom the man who is wilfully inert and disinclined to make the best of every opportunity, appears as the self-satisfied dunce appears to the average healthy schoolboy. He discloses a characteristic faith in the virtues of encouragement. He gives advice and instruction without

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assuming "superiority." Whilst he is studying nature you divine that he is studying man at the same time.

The book on "Pig-sticking" unostentatiously but adequately serves to show how deeply its author appreciates the necessity of studying "the native view" of what strengthens and what weakens "our hold on India." How characteristic is his comparison between fox-hunting and hog-hunting, suggesting as it does so unforgettably how perfect conditions destroy the soul of a man's work whether it be for pleasure or for profit. And then, as regards the quarry and its pursuit, you see that he is chivalrous even to a boar. But to get the full benefit to be derived from this book it must be read at first hand.

Taking up pig-sticking with enthusiasm, the Chief Scout of course secured the blue ribbon of the sport in India—the Kadir cup. This he won in 1883, a year in which there were no fewer than fifty-four competitors for that much-coveted trophy, which is given by the Meerut Tent Club, the leading club of its kind in the whole of the northern part of India. On the memorable occasion of his victory he rode a horse named "Patience."

If he has known a prouder moment in his life, it was when he fired the difficult shot that brought a man-eating tiger down just in time to save a comrade's life.

Lieutenant-Colonel Newnham-Davis, a soldier who has distinguished himself in various parts of the world, says that "the man who can win a Kadir cup must have all the lore of the jungle at his fingers' ends, must see further and judge quicker than other men, in addition to being a perfect horseman." It is a legitimate question whether, since the Chief Scout has so well proved his contention that the sport of pig-sticking provides us with our best cavalry school,

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the authorities are any the more inclined than they used to be to favour its growth.

This brings us to the connection between the sport to which we have been referring and the art of scouting, which the Chief has brought under world-wide notice in a manner comparable only to that in which Captain Mahan, the world's leading naval historian, has emphasised the importance of sea power. For many years there was in our midst one who did all he knew to prepare himself and to prepare us for the trial we passed through in South Africa; but his voice was like that of one crying in the wilderness.

Here are some suggestive words published by the Chief Scout in 1889 with regard to pig-sticking as a training for the soldier: "The most sporting of all methods of finding pig is by 'pugging' or tracking them to their lairs by their footmarks or 'pugs.' . . . There exist numerous professors of the art who are trained to it from childhood, and who can follow signs that are quite invisible to the untrained eye. An Englishman, though he may never hope to attain the skill of a professional, may, with a little trouble and continual practice, learn to track well enough for ordinary emergencies, and once tried it is a pursuit that he will not quickly give up; for there is an indescribable charm about pugging unknown to one who has never practised it.

"Without doubt the constant and varied exercise of the inductive reasoning powers called into play in the pursuit must exert a beneficial effect on the mind, and the actual pleasure of riding and killing a boar is doubly enhanced by the knowledge that he has been found by the fair and sporting exercise of one's own 'bump of woodcraft.' The sharpness of intellect which we are wont to associate with the detective is nothing more than the result of training that inductive reasoning which is almost innate in

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"HE DREW A STEADY BEAD ON ME."

(An incident in the Matabele campaign.)

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the savage. To the child of the jungle the ground with its signs is at once his book, his map, and his newspaper. Remember the volume of meaning contained in the single print of Friday's foot on Crusoe's beach."

Not forgetting the necessity of studying habits as well as "spoor" and "pugs," the Chief Scout developed the thoughts that stirred him when he wrote the above-quoted passage; with the result that we have in "Reconnaissance and Scouting"* and "Aids to Scouting"† works the fascination of which, even to the ordinary reader, almost rivals that attaching to "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes."

When the 5th Dragoon Guards were at Meerut in 1897 or 1898 Baden-Powell formed a body of scouts, to whose training he gave the benefit of his own vast and peculiar experience. Beginning with six volunteers, he increased the number to thirty, in the first place stimulating the interest of the men by getting them to read Mr. (now Sir Arthur) Conan Doyle's famous detective stories. Midnight was the Chief Scout's favourite time for work. He would sleep most of the day, and carry on scouting operations all through the night. On any night that was particularly black he would send out bodies of men to find their way about the country, with nothing but their own intelligence to guide them. Selecting a starting-point in the inky blackness, he would say, "Ride out seven miles from here and find your way back again." The only help he gave them was an injunction to look back at every object passed, most landmarks presenting different views from opposite sides, and the opposite side being, of course, the one seen on the return journey. But he was careful to instil into the minds of his pupils the necessity of being prepared to return by a route other than that taken in the first instance.

* William Clowes. 1891.

† Gale and Polden. 1899.

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But he found plenty of time for play as well as for work whilst in India, and there and elsewhere he contrived to work in the same direction as Lord Roberts for the betterment and popularity of the Service. His faculty for the stage doubtless aided his efforts in more serious directions as well as supplied a needed set-off to the strain of duty. Recognition of his gifts as a comedian spread not only from station to station but to London, and from the capital whose power it is to act as a magnet to the greater part of the national (not to speak of foreign) talents there reached him, so we are credibly informed, a serious offer of a somewhat lucrative engagement should he care to leave the army for the stage. In fine, his fame as an actor outran, so far as the outside world is concerned, his distinction as a soldier.

The Savoy operas appear to have been special favourites with Baden-Powell, the fine edge of Sir W. S. Gilbert's satire, no less than the ever-delightful music to which the words are wedded, finding affinity in his tastes and temperament.

Even under moderately favourable conditions amateur theatricals present extraordinary difficulties save to the most expert of stage managers. The Chief Scout has saved a dramatic situation on more than one occasion. A splendid case in point is chronicled in connection with the occupation of Kandahar by the British in the eighties. He planned and carried to perfection a performance of "Patience" in the Afghan capital. The reception of the opera was commensurate with the difficulties involved in its presentment. But the key to the success was in the title. And he must have displayed enough patience then to supply an ordinary man for years. All the costumes were of his designing, and as there was no lady of his own land there to help, he himself played the part of Ruth.

On another occasion when "Trial by Jury" was to

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be given, it appears that it was not discovered until just prior to the performance that the Royal arms had not been provided. Baden-Powell, however, was fully equal to the needs of the moment. Making an excursion of inquiry amongst the natives he succeeded in procuring some colours, and with these and the aid of an old shaving brush the difficulty was more than satisfactorily disposed of.

When Kandahar had been evacuated and the troops were returning to Quetta, the Chief Scout had one of his many escapes from an untimely end. In this instance Providence rather than any individual skilfulness proved his best friend. It seems that he was actually playing with a loaded pistol—whether he knew that the weapon was loaded or not is not stated. Suddenly there was an explosion, and a bullet entered his leg, causing a wound which proved sufficiently disagreeable to leave a permanent reminder behind it.

CHAPTER IV

First Visit to South Africa—The Zululand Operations of 1888—
Three Years in Malta—A Friend to "Tommy Atkins"—
Selected for Special Service in Ashanti.

IT was in 1884 that the Chief Scout had his initial experience of the country—Bechuanaland—whose little border town, Mafeking, will always be associated with his name. In 1884 Sir Bartle Frere died; and it is an open question whether, if the proposal made in 1878 by that great administrator for a Bechuana protectorate had been adopted by the British Government at the time it was made, much of the subsequent trouble we have had in that part of the world would not have been obviated.

Early in 1884 President Kruger with two companions came to England—Mr. Gladstone was then in power—and secured certain modifications of the Pretoria convention, but stipulations were made involving a British protectorate over Bechuanaland. To these stipulations the Boer representatives agreed. The Volksraad (or Transvaal Legislature) ratified the new agreement; but it was not long before serious trouble broke out. The chief Montsoia was compelled to enter into a treaty with the Boers; a British resident named Bethell, who was acting as agent to one of the Bechuana chiefs, came to his death by foul means; and though at the Cape sympathy with the Transvaalers was not inconsiderable nor voiceless, feeling ran so high both there and in England that the Home authorities resolved to assert British authority.

Parliament voted a big sum—£725,000—for the

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pur, and an expedition was arranged, the command of which was given to Sir Charles Warren. Peace was eventually attained and fresh agreements were entered upon, as to the pros and cons of which this is not the place to decide. But as the Chief Scout went to South Africa with Sir Baker Russell to assist in the reconnaissance work regarded as a necessary preliminary to the Warren expedition, some brief indication of the condition of affairs at that time as between the Britons and the Boers is likely to be helpful to the reader's memory, and perhaps to some extent may be suggestive.

It is interesting to remember that in 1884, in addition to giving trouble in Bechuanaland on the west, the Boers were active on the east. England, on the death of Cetewayo, refusing to exercise sovereign rights over Zululand, the Transvaalers installed Dinizulu in his father's stead, and succeeded ultimately in securing the best portion of Zululand. British Zulular was not annexed till 1887, in which year Baden-Powell was Brigade-Major at the Jubilee Review.

In 1888 Zulu problems were in the ascendant. On 23rd January in this year the Chief Scout was appointed aide-de-camp to the general officer commanding at the Cape—his uncle, Lieutenant-General (afterwards Sir) H. A. Smyth. Boer encroachments and the rising associated with the names of Dinizulu, Undabuko, and Tshingana created alarm in Natal, and Lord Salisbury's Government was compelled to take action. Dinizulu, who seems to have been something of a victim of circumstances, was aided and abetted by "white men."

The insurrection was put down after considerable delay, and the chiefs were captured and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. Baden-Powell acted as intelligence officer with the British forces during the protracted and very trying operations conducted

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by his uncle, and his invaluable services were recognised in the official despatches. In June he was given the additional appointment of Assistant Military Secretary to Lieutenant-General Smyth. He held the dual office of Assistant Military Secretary and A.D.C. from 21st June 1888 till 15th January, 1890. In 1888 came his first book, a series of lectures entitled, "Cavalry Instructions."*

On 2nd May, 1889, Sir Hercules Robinson (afterwards Lord Rosmead) left the Cape for England, and he having resigned the position he had so long held as Governor and High Commissioner, Lieutenant-General Smyth was appointed administrator for the time being, holding the post till the arrival in December of Sir Henry (Lord) Loch.

Towards the close of 1889 Sir Francis De Winton was sent out to confer with Joubert and De Smidt on the condition of affairs in Swaziland; and in a secretarial capacity Baden-Powell not only did useful work during this conference, but he must have added considerably to his knowledge of the views and aspirations of the Boers.

When, at the beginning of 1890, Lieutenant-General Smyth proceeded to Malta to succeed the late Sir Henry Torrens as Governor and Commander-in-Chief, his nephew went with him as A.M.S. and A.D.C., and remained at Valetta till April, 1893. Soon after his appointment considerable interest was aroused by the Papal mission of Sir Lintorn Simmons relative to the "mixed marriages" question; and in this problem and that of the Constitution, perhaps, apart from purely military matters, chiefest interest was taken at Valetta during "B.-P.'s" three years' sojourn there. Till February, 1893, the Governor was President of the Council.

Baden-Powell, who was given his majority on 1st July, 1892, was much struck by the want of provision

* Harrison.

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made in the island to relieve the dull life of the ordinary soldier. He did not forget the claims of the "Handy Man." With characteristic enthusiasm he threw himself into the congenial work of promoting concerts, theatrical performances, and other amusements for the benefit of the men.

And here let it be remarked in parenthesis that the Chief Scout's opinion of Mr. Thomas Atkins is not one at which any friend of the British private can find cause to cavil. "Tommy Atkins," he writes, in a prefatory note to his "Aids to Scouting," "is not the childish boy that the British public are too apt to think him, to be ignored in peace and petted in war. He is, on the contrary, a man who reads and thinks for himself, and he is keen on any instruction in really practical soldiering, especially if it promises a spice of that dash and adventure which is so dear to a Briton." And amongst the men "B.-P." was as popular as an instructor as in almost any other of his numerous characters.

But to return to Malta, and Baden-Powell's untiring devotion to the recreative exercises of the garrison. "Over and over again," to quote Mr. Begbie's delightful contribution to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, "did he ask to be excused from dining at the Verdala Palace, because the hour clashed with his engagements in the reading rooms and the gymnasium. It was in the gymnasium that the theatricals took place, and the large building during these performances presented a really astonishing sight. The floor, of course, was crowded. In the front were the stately chairs from the Palace for the Governor and his staff, and from these to the end of the building, tight as sardines, were packed large numbers of soldiers and a few sailors—a few sailors, because the Handy Man preferred to see his favourite from the rafters, where he sat shoulder to shoulder, almost as closely packed as the people below. The cheer

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set up by this splendid audience when 'B.-P.' appeared was, even without the crowd on the rafters, enough to bring down the house."

And the Chief Scout could not only sacrifice stately dinners in a historic palace in such a cause. On one occasion, when the time came for the performance of a particular piece, it found him down with the fever. He got out of bed, went through the performance, and then back to bed again.

There are some amusing anecdotes of the Chief Scout's life at Malta. We are told that he was once present at an entertainment at which a young lady gave an exposition of skirt-dancing. Everybody was delighted at the performer's agility, and the fair *danseuse* was urged to repeat the display. The persuasion produced by cheers failing to achieve its object, the General turned to Baden-Powell and said, "You ask her." For once in a way the versatile officer was at fault. The lady simply would not consent to repeat her performance. "I really couldn't," she said, with a slight lisp and in a somewhat affected manner. "You see, I am almost breathless now." Having exhausted his powers of persuasion, "B.-P." went back to the Governor. "What does she say, Major? Will she oblige again?" he was asked. "She says, sir," replied Baden-Powell, "she says she'll be *blowed* if she does!"

In 1890 Baden-Powell published a little work entitled "Vedette," and the tiny but fascinating book on "Reconnaissance and Scouting," which soon ran into a second edition. In the latter work he wrote: "Success in modern warfare depends on accurate knowledge of the enemy and of the country in which the war is carried on. . . . The brain and strong arm, the general and his troops, are helpless unless the scouts explain where, when, and how to strike or to ward off attack."

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When Baden-Powell left Malta in 1893, it is tolerably certain he had become pretty thoroughly acquainted with the romantic military history of the island and of the heroic Knights of St. John who raised its massive fortifications. "The flower of the world," as the Maltese call their island home, is a place that is sacred in the history of memorable sieges.

In 1894 Baden-Powell was in England, and attended the military manœuvres in Berkshire. Another story of his stoical indifference to pain is told *apropos* of these manœuvres. As Brigade-Major he made his appearance in the field carrying his right arm in a sling, and his hand in a loose, black cashmere binding. He had been bitten by a dog, and was undergoing treatment to prevent possible hydrophobia. "Part of the 'cure' was that so many times a day the hand should be held in boiling water. 'B.-P.' procured a spirit-lamp and a small white-enamelled saucepan, in which, whilst it was held over the spirit-lamp, he parboiled his hand the requisite number of times a day. He rode with the others for the twenty-one days of the manœuvres, and never excused himself a single duty. Being ambidextrous he was enabled to write his reports every evening, and his narratives were models of what such documents should be, beautifully illustrated with maps and sketches."

Baden-Powell was now approaching the "time limit" at which majors, unless specially nominated for a command, have to take a retiring allowance. There seemed no chance of his getting a "step" in his regiment. But trouble arose in Ashanti. In November, 1895, the command of an expedition was given to Sir Francis Scott, and Baden-Powell was amongst the first to be selected for special service with him.

CHAPTER V

Organising a Native Levy at Cape Coast Castle—A Chance Meeting in an African Swamp—Through the Adansi Forest—Prempeh's Downfall—Promotion—Again Gazetted for Special Service.

THE story of British relations with Ashanti forms an interesting and an instructive, if a not altogether satisfactory chapter in our colonial history. Our first conflict with the natives involved a remarkable object-lesson in the utility of scouting, or rather of the fateful folly of faulty reconnaissance.

It was during their conquest of the Fantis (1807-1826) that the Ashanti tribes came into collision with the British. They were finally driven from the coast, but not before a terrible disaster had been inflicted upon us. In 1823-24 the Governor of the Gold Coast, Sir Charles Macarthy, crossed the Prah with a force of some five hundred natives and a few European officers. He fell into an ambush, his ammunition became exhausted—it was reported that some of his kegs of "gunpowder" contained only vermicelli!—and very few of the force survived to tell the tale. The Governor's skull, rimmed with gold, was for something like half a century the drinking-cup of the kings of Kumassi.

Since 1823 troubles with the tribes had been continuous, the most important offensive operations on our part prior to 1895 being those conducted in 1873-74 by Sir Garnet (afterwards Viscount) Wolseley.

Sir Francis Scott did not make the character-

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istically English mistake of underestimating the strength of the enemy; and so swiftly were the operations carried out that no time was given for preparations. The part of the Ashanti kinglet, and passive submission was the result. To Baden-Powell's masterly organisation of the native levy no little of the success of the expedition was due. This levy was formed of about five hundred native warriors, and it was sent ahead as the covering front of the expedition proper. Baden-Powell was assisted by Captain Graham, D.S.O., in the work of getting the men together.

Here is the Chief's graphic description of the manner in which the levy was mustered after three days of alternate cajoling and threatening the various "kings and chiefs" to undertake to produce five hundred men on 16th December, 1895, by noon:—"Cape Coast Castle, 16th December, noon:—The parade ground outside the castle lies an arid desert in the midday sun, and the sea breeze wanders where it listeth. Not a man is there. It is a matter then for a hammock ride through the slums of the slum that forms the town. Kings are forked out of the hovels where they are lodging, at the end of a stick; they in their turn rouse out their captains, and by two o'clock the army is assembled. Then it is a sight for the gods to see 'the Sutler' [Captain Graham] putting each man in his place. The stupid inertness of the puzzled negro is duller than that of an ox; a dog would grasp your meaning in one-half the time."

Let not the reader run away with any mistaken idea, derived from the foregoing remarks, as to Baden-Powell's treatment of the levy. Let him read "The Downfall of Prempeh"* first. But to resume our quotation: "If," writes Baden-Powell, "it were not for the depressing heat and the urgency

* Methuen. 1896.

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of the work, one could sit down and laugh to tears at the absurdity of the thing, but under the circumstances it is a little 'wearing.' But our motto is the old West Coast proverb, 'Softly, softly, catch the monkey'; in other words, 'Don't hurry; patience gains the day.' It was in joke suggested as a maxim for our levy of softly-sneaking scouts, but we came to adopt it as our guiding principle, and I do not believe that a man acting on any other principle could organise a native levy on the West Coast—and live.

"Gradually out of chaos order comes. Kings and chiefs are installed as officers, and the men are roughly divided into companies under their orders. Then the uniform is issued. This consists of nothing more than a red fez for each man, but it gives as much satisfaction to the naked warrior as does his first tunic to the young hussar.

"Arms are to be issued to the corps at Prahsu, and that the intervening seventy miles may not be traversed uselessly each man is now supplied with a commissariat load to carry on his head. At three o'clock the levy is ready for the march.

"His Excellency the Governor inspects the ranks and says a few encouraging words to the leading chiefs and captains. Among the men we muster a few with drums and others who are artists on the horn. The horn in this case consists of a hollowed elephant's tusk, garnished with many human jaw-bones—its notes are never more than two, and those of doleful tone; but at the signal for the march these horns give out a raucous din which, deepened by the rumble of the elephant-hide drums, imparts a martial ardour to the men, and soon the jabbering, laughing mob goes shambling through the streets, bound for the bush beyond."

Then follows an impressive picture of the five days' march to Prahsu through wondrously beautiful but unspeakably aromatic forest. "The rule here seems

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to be, the prettier the spot, the more deadly is its air." At least one expedition has been thwarted by sickness. As Baden-Powell says, Sir Francis Scott had not merely one, but two enemies opposed to him. One was King Prempeh, the other and more formidable being King Fever. On the way to Prahsu are met the commissariat carriers, a "mass of usually blundering natives working just like clockwork" within three days of organisation. The head men of the villages are interviewed with an eye to the needs of the oncoming troops. A.S.C. and Engineer officers are seen hard at work from dawn to dusk, at the construction of rest-camps, stores, telegraph, and bridges.

"Here and there along the road we come to bridges over streams and causeways over swamps all in course of construction at the hands of scores of natives, working with an amount of energy that is most surprising when one sees how few and far between are the ever-travelling hard-worked white superintendents. Here we meet one gaunt and yellow. Surely we have seen that eye and brow before, although the beard and solar topee do much to disguise the man. His necktie of faded 'Old Carthusian' colours makes suspicion a certainty, and once again old schoolfellows are flung together for an hour to talk in an African swamp of old times on English playing fields." But there is little time for talk, and again the levy presses on "through the never-ending dark green aisles," and so to the advanced base on the river Prah.

Of the little band of eight white men preparing matters in Prahsu, Baden-Powell found three down with fever. "Still they peg away, one day down, the next up and smiling again—but sometimes the smile is a little wan. All that buoys them up is hope—hope that through their 'bucking up' their side will win the game."

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And beyond the Prah—what then? The reader who has not made himself acquainted with "The Downfall of Prempeh," and is otherwise ignorant of the country and its customs, can have little idea of the work ahead of the native levy.

Between Prahsu and the actual Ashanti border lie miles of dense forest culminating in the Adansi hills, 1500 feet above sea-level. The route had to be dotted with a chain of defensive camps so as to preserve the lines of communications. The Ashantis' plan of campaign "is to secretly cut a path for themselves through the bush away from the line of the main road, but parallel to it. When their scouts have warned them that they have well passed the main force or depôt whose destruction they desire, they cut their way to the road and then lie in ambush for parties endeavouring to pass up or down, or they make a raid on a convoy in camp; thus with a comparatively small body they are enabled to completely cut off their enemy from his base." With the aid of about one hundred and fifty of the Houssa police (drawn from the fighting Mohammedan tribes of the Hinterland), the leader of the native levy proceeded to take precautionary steps against the tactics of the Ashantis.

The Chief Scout speaks highly of the Adansis who formed his advanced outposts—born bushmen who delighted in work giving them a chance of avenging the oppression of the men of Kumassi. With him, too, were a company of Elminas under the veteran chief, Ando. Ando, to whom Baden-Powell dedicates his book, was a fine old warrior who wore on his breast the Ashanti medal of 1873-74, when he served first in Sir Evelyn Wood's native levy, and then as native adviser on the staff of Lord Wolseley.

Remembering the description of the men recruited at Cape Coast Castle, the reader can well imagine the difficulties encountered by their leader and by

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Captain Graham north of Prahsu. If not, then are they duly chronicled in "The Downfall of Prempeh." In the midst of it all Baden-Powell found time to forward some excellent dispatches to the *London Daily Chronicle*, and admirable sketches to the *Graphic* and its bright little daily namesake.

Meanwhile the chiefs and captains of some eight thousand Ashanti warriors armed with guns and rifles were taking "fetish" (or oath) for war "in the leisurely fashion peculiar to all business, however urgent, in this part of the world." Lord Wolseley, in a noteworthy disquisition on "The Negro as Soldier,"* describes the simple and effective way in which courage is inculcated in the Ashantis. The passage discloses the origin of some lines which the Chief Scout is said to be fond of quoting: "The Ashanti knows that if he disobeys the orders of his superiors he will be immediately put to death; the Fanti knows that he can run away with impunity. If in the battle the Ashanti turns to fly, there are men on the lookout close behind him who have positive orders to kill him without any quarter. If these men in the second line fail to do their duty in this respect, their superiors again in the third line, whom I may call the subaltern officers, will kill both them and the runaway coward. There are several lines of several grades behind the front fighting lines, each having a similar preventive duty imposed upon it, until the general commanding is reached. If he fails, if he is defeated, he answers for his failure with his head when he returns to Kumassi. . . . The refrain of the Ashanti war song, which they sang together in a shouting voice when going into action, was:—

"If I go forward I die,
If I go backward I die;
Better go forward and die."

* *Fortnightly Review*, December, 1888.

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At the foot of the Adansi mountains the Chief and his advanced party met the "good, cheery-looking bush warriors" who were to act as scouts. I cannot resist the temptation to quote the description of his palaver with these "fine, wild children of the bush": "How they enjoy the palaver in which," he writes, "I tell them that 'they are the eyes to the body of the snake which is crawling up the bush path from the coast and coiling for its spring! The eyes are hungry, but they will soon have meat; and the main body of white men, armed with the best of weapons, will help them win the day, and get their country back again, to enjoy in peace for ever.'"

On 4th January, 1896, an urgent message was received from the King of Bekwai—a place near Amoaful—seeking British protection. The Chief headed a flying column, and after a weird night march was received by the King in council, and on the following day hoisted the British colours at Bekwai amidst much ceremony.

As is well known, the Ashanti capital was occupied without opposition. Many officers had, despite fever attacks, succeeded in getting to the front full of service zeal, only to meet with disappointment. On Baden-Powell and his native levy the pioneering had fallen heavily; and now they had to be on the alert against treachery, and to see that Prempeh and the queen-mother made no successful attempt to escape. At this point of the narrative the Chief writes: "The queen-mother looked a good-natured, smiling little woman; but beneath that smile she is said to hide a store of villainy." At the moment he wrote, the leader of the levy, with his brother officers, was smarting under a bitter sense of disappointment. A long and toilsome march had ended in a scene of meanness and squalor. By and by, when the moment of Prempeh's "downfall" came, and he was

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"bowing himself to the earth for mercy, as doubtless many and many a victim to his lust for blood had bowed in vain to him, and around him were his ministers on their feet clamouring for delay and reconsideration of the case," the "only 'man' among them was the queen."

Governor Maxwell's *coup* in arresting Prempeh, the queen, and the chiefs had not been anticipated, or there would have been fighting after all. The removal alive of the prisoners was a matter of supreme difficulty, but after some arduous reconnoitring the task was accomplished under the most gloomy conditions, the death of Prince Henry of Battenberg having proved the last straw to a load of accumulated disappointments.

From Kumassi Baden-Powell brought Prempeh's hat. He also secured the great execution bowl and stand used in the sacrificial rites.

The Chief's tributes to the pluck of the British soldiers, more especially on the return march, and to the adaptiveness of the native levy are well worth reading. These tributes came from the heart; and they move the heart. Despite the thoroughness of the preparations, medical and other, 50 per cent. of the men and something like 80 per cent. of the officers were attacked by the fever. These few words should convey an idea of the viciousness of the climate. The work begun in November had been carried through, and the troops were back at Cape Coast Castle at the beginning of the following February.

In March, 1896, Major Baden-Powell, who had been honourably mentioned in the official dispatches of Sir Francis Scott, was awarded the star and a brevet lieutenant-colonelcy. On the 2nd of May ensuing he was again gazetted for special service in South Africa in connection with the Matabele trouble.

CHAPTER VI.

Belfast to Buluwayo—Mafeking in 1896—Causes of the Matabele Rising—Not a "Nigger-hater"—Some Close Shaves.

WHAT stories have we heard of the doings of venturous Britons in the outskirts of the Empire, and beyond in those wild if beautiful islands of the Pacific that are known even by name to so few! Stories not of the Munchausen or Mandeville or De Rougemont type merely, in which some strata of verifiable truth may be, but simple, modest stories of pluck and endurance that move the heart of the Briton—who is true Briton—as few things on this ear can. And among these stories that told by the Chief Scout of the Matabele War of 1896* takes a foremost place, for it is not merely personal but national in its interest and its importance, serious, informative, humorous by turns and graphic as anything short of the actions and scenes it describes can be.

Amongst Baden-Powell's other characteristics is the habit of keeping a diary; and as his history of the operations in Matabeleland and Mashonaland is based on his diary, which was written under all sorts of conditions, even under fire, it could not well (written as it was by such a man) be anything but vivid and picturesque.

Let us begin at the beginning. We had just left the Chief returned from the miasmatic, fever-laden Gold Coast, and we find him again at Belfast, after a few weeks' interval, under orders to embark at Southampton for South Africa on 2nd May, to assist

* "The Matabele Campaign, 1896." Methuen, 1897.

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Sir Frederick Carrington against the Matebele rebels. And the tireless soldier comments, "What better invitation could one want?" Then for a few days he lived "in constant dread of being run over or otherwise prevented from going after all." "But," he says, "fortune favoured me."

The account of the journey from the Cape to Buluwayo is delightful—much more so than was the journey itself to the travellers. Stage one was a rattling ("bumpity") one of three days and two nights in a train to Mafeking. "We don't go fast, and often stop to execute repairs." The town was reached at 6 A.M. on 22nd May:—"Into Mafeking?" Well, there's a little tin (corrugated iron) house and a goods shed to form the station; hundreds of waggons and mounds of stores covered with tarpaulins, and on beyond a street and market square and low-roofed tin houses. Mafeking is at present the railway terminus. The waggons and the goods are waiting to go north to Matabeleland, but here they're stranded for want of transport, since all the oxen on the road are dying fast from rinderpest." The town was crowded with troops. "B-P.," as Chief Staff Officer, made the acquaintance of the rest of the staff.

The journey from Mafeking to Buluwayo, a distance of five hundred and fifty-seven miles, was performed by coach, "a regular Buffalo-Bill-Wild-West-Deadwood affair, hung by huge leather springs," drawn by ten mules. After ten days and nights of switchback travelling, which is compared to yachting in a small vessel in bad weather, Buluwayo was reached on 3rd June; and the C.S.O. began his work. The transport service over the five hundred and fifty-seven miles of horrible road from Mafeking had to be organised; also a medical staff and ordnance department. That was, however, but a small section of his duties. Frequent are the references to the

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strain of close office work; but "B.P." found it "interesting" all the same.

As during the war in South Africa similar difficulties to those presented in Matabeleland in 1896 had to be encountered on a larger scale, it may be interesting to quote Baden-Powell's references to the Colonial view of the Imperial officer. "It is," he writes, "a daily source of wonder to me how the General" [Sir Frederick Carrington] "manages to handle some of the local officers and men. Of course, with the better class it is impossible not to get on well, but there are certain individuals, who to any ordinary Imperial officer would be perfectly 'impossible.' Sir Frederick, however, is round them in a moment, and either coaxes or frightens them into acquiescence as the case demands; but were any general, without his personal knowledge of South Africa and its men, to attempt to take this motley force in hand, I cannot think there would be anything but ructions in a very short space of time. A little tact and give-and-take properly applied reaps a good return from Colonial troops, but the slightest show of domineering or letter-of-the-regulations discipline is apt to turn them crusty or 'impossible.'"

"A very good instance of the general feeling that seems to influence the local troops is shown in the following letter which the General has received. (The writer of it leaves it to the discretion of the General where to insert commas and stops):—

"To Mr. Frederick Carrington, General.

"SIR Seeing in the papers and news from the North the serious phase that affairs are taking I am willing to raise by your permission a set of Good hard practical colonials here that have seen service Farmers Sons and Chuck my situation and head them off as a Yeomanry Corps I have been under you Sir in the B.B.P. (Bechuanaland Border Police) and am well

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acquainted with the Big gun Drill and a Good Shot with the maxim. We will consider it an honour to stand under you Sir but object to eye glasses and kid gloves otherwise.—Yrs to command, H.—"

Baden-Powell explains that "eye-glass and kid gloves" stand in the estimation of "H.—" and other honest yeomen of the Colony for "Imperial officer." He continues: "Unfortunately the Colonials have had experience of one class or another of regular officers which has not suited their taste, and his defects get on their nerves and impress themselves on their minds, and they are very apt to look on such an individual as the type of his kind, and if they afterwards meet with others having different attributes, they merely consider them as exceptions which prove the rule."

Baden-Powell, writing in 1896 accurately hit off the characteristics that make for popularity and efficiency in the officer controlling Colonial forces, and the reader will be able to judge by this time how admirably the Chief himself has fulfilled the essentials he desiderates.

"No doubt there are certain types among us, and our training and upbringing in the service are apt to gradually run us in the groove of one type or another. The type which is perhaps most of a red rag to the Colonial is the highly trained officer, bound hand and foot by the rules of modern war, who moves his force on a matured deliberate plan, with all minutiae correctly prepared beforehand, incapable of change to meet any altered or unforeseen circumstances, and who has a proper contempt for nigger foes and for Colonial allies alike."

Then there is the unduly fussy man. But happily these types—and in 1896 the Colonials in Buluwayo were beginning to realise it—are the exception. "What is now," writes Baden-Powell, "more often met with is the man who calmly smokes yet works as hard and as keenly as the best of them. Quick to

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adapt his measures to the country he is in, and ready to adopt some other than the drill-book teachings where they don't apply with his particular foe. Understanding the principle of give-and-take without letting all run slack. The three C's which go to make a commander—coolness, common sense, and courage—are the attributes *par excellence* of the proper and more usual type of the British officer. For be it understood that 'coolness' stands for absence of hurry, pettiness, and indecision; 'common sense' for tactics, strategy, and all supply arrangements; while 'courage' means the necessary dash and leadership of men."

But to return to the subject of the Matabele campaign. Baden-Powell soon places his readers in possession of the facts about the war. They stir one even now. The Jameson raid, which involved the withdrawal of the armed forces from the country, and the compulsory slaughtering of cattle to prevent the spread of the rinderpest (a course which the natives thought was adopted to starve them to death), precipitated matters. Then the rebels were instigated by their priests, who goaded them on with promises of the easy decimation of the whites. Murders of helpless women and little children and worse were early features of the outbreak; and the wonder is not that the operations of the British force of little over five thousand men took eight months to subdue thirty thousand warriors in a country equal in size to Italy, France, and Spain put together; but that there was not a horrible massacre on a big scale at the outset. The lust for blood on the part of the Matabele outran their discretion; and the murders in the outlying farms acted as the needed warning to the majority of the white settlers.

At one place "a bride, just out from the peace and civilisation at home, had her happy dream suddenly wrecked by a rush of savages into the farmstead.

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Her husband was struck down, but she managed to escape to the next farm, some four miles distant, only to find its occupants already fled. Ignorant of the country and of the people, the poor girl gathered together what tinned food she could carry, and making her way to the river, she made herself a grassy nest among the rocks, where she hoped to escape detection. For a few terrible days and nights she existed there, till the Matabele came upon her tracks, and shortly stoned her to death—another added to their tale of over a hundred and fifty victims within a week." The Matabele, who resembled the Ashantis in this respect, provided men whose duty it was to kill any of the natives who desired to make peace with or surrender to the whites.

"It is a far cry from Mashonaland to England," writes Baden-Powell, whilst moved by the reports of massacres that reached him; "and distance lessens the sharpness of the sympathy, but to men on the spot—men with an especially strong, manly, and chivalrous spirit in them, as is the case in this land of pioneers—to them such cases as these appeal in a manner which cannot be realised in dear, drowsy, after-lunch Old England. A man here does not mind carrying his life in his hand—he likes it, and takes an attack on himself as a good bit of sport; but touch a woman or a child, and he is in a blind fury in a moment."

Baden-Powell, as has before been pointed out, is no "nigger-hater." He has met "lots of good friends" among the blacks, especially Zulus, of whom the Matabele are a branch. But, he writes, "however good they may be, they must as a people be ruled with a hand of iron in a velvet glove." Prior to the war of 1896 they took the glove off themselves. As an example of the velvet glove at work witness the charming picture, given in the book to which I have been referring, of the colonel and his Hussars (the

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7th Hussars on this occasion) tending a native woman and native children who had been hit by stray bullets as they were lying hid in the grass.

How did the Chief strike those who had to work with him at this time? One has to read much between the lines of his own record to glean anything like a full estimate of the value of his services. Writes Mr. Alexander Davis in the *Navy and Army Illustrated* of 17th March, 1900: "The one quality prominent in Baden-Powell, contrasting somewhat with the average officer, is the manner in which he carries out his military duties. Dressed in the plain khaki uniform and slouched hat of South African warfare, there is nothing starched or imposing in his appearance or demeanour. He has neither a poker down his back, padding in his shoulders, nor a forbidding or condescending air in intercourse. He is simply quite natural and generally smiling. In conversation you forget the military man, and only see the shrewd man of the world and courteous gentleman. At the time when many deserved and undeserved sarcasms were uttered against most of the Staff by the civilian population, Baden-Powell—the little that was seen of him in camp—always met with praise. Did he wish something done, or whatever dealings he may have had with the storekeepers, he always arranged matters with the maximum of pleasantness and the minimum of military stiffness or sense of command." Like Sir Frederick Carrington, he knew how to overcome the prejudice of the Colonial against the Imperial officer.

But there was fighting as well as office routine for him. He was soon in action. Then he was sent to act as guide to Lieutenant-Colonel Plumer, who was to have the direction of operations in the Matopos. After further office labours he had command of the column which defeated Uwini, marched (for a considerable distance on famine rations) through the



"HIS HEAD IS LOW, HIS EYES GAZE STRAIGHT UPON THE CAMP OF
THE ENEMY."

(A memory of the siege of Mafeking.)

[p. 92.]

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Somabula Forest, subdued Wedza, and helped to pacify the frontier.

He had two marvellously narrow escapes from being put out of action. In the fight on the Umgusa River on 6th June, having emptied the magazine of his Colt's repeater, he went on with his revolver. "Presently," he writes, "I came on an open stretch of ground, and about eighty yards before me was a Kaffir with a Martini-Henry. He saw me, and dropped on one knee and drew a steady bead on me. I felt so indignant at this that I rode at him as hard as I could go, calling him every name under the sun. He aimed—for an hour it seemed to me—and it was quite a relief when at last he fired, at about ten yards' distance, and still more of a relief when I realised he had clean missed me. Then he jumped up and turned to run, but he had not gone two paces when he cringed as if someone had slapped him hard on the back, then his head dropped and his heels flew up, and he fell on his face, shot by one of our men behind me."

Shortly afterwards Baden-Powell had taken up a position under a tree when, he tells us, "something moving over my head caught my attention. It was a gun-barrel taking aim down at me, the firer jammed so close to the tree-stem as to look like part of it. Before I could move he fired, and just ploughed into the ground at my feet."

In earlier days the Chief underwent a course of training in the intricacies of skirt-dancing to enable him to take part in a charity performance. The agility he thus acquired stood him in good stead when scouting. He had ventured too far in a cave, and was surprised by a party of natives, who thought they had an easy victim. However, by leaping from boulder to boulder—he wore rubber-soled boots—and moving continuously, he succeeded in evading his pursuers.

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On another occasion, when he was assisting to dislodge the Matabele from their caves in the Matopos, he suddenly felt a blow on his thigh, as though someone had struck him with a hammer. "It knocked me down, and I turned round thinking that I must have run against a tree-stump, but none was there." He had been struck with a lead-cased stone fired from a big-bore gun.

Once a mule, to whose back a loaded carbine had been strapped, passed a bush near to him, a twig caught the trigger of the weapon, and the bullet nearly found its billet in his body. Another time he had his hat shot off his head—this was at Wedza's stronghold. By acting on a hint supplied by a startled buck he just managed to escape from a party of Matabele who had been stalking the stalker. These are a few instances of their kind out of many. In June he was down with fever and dysentery, but, thanks to good doctoring and nursing, he eluded the attacks of disease as he did those of the Matabele.

CHAPTER VII

"Impeesa" (the Wolf)—On the Teachings of History—"Nerves"
—Night Thoughts—A Vision of the Veldt—An Impression
of Table Mountain.

THE Matabele often saw Baden-Powell at work by night. He acted as scout because he liked the work; but also because, with the exception of the American scouts Burnham and Gielgud, who were his companions for a time, there was no one else who could do it effectively. The friendly natives lacked the necessary pluck and energy; the white scouts, "though keen and plucky as lions," had "never been trained in the necessary intricacies of mapping and reporting."

Baden-Powell was responsible for most of the military maps made of the difficult country and distributed to the officers. He located the rebels so that they were completely surprised and their movements were accurately anticipated. The Matabele called him "Impeesa" (wolf), which his "boy," whom he named "Diamond" because he was "a jewel of a servant," translated, "The beast that does not sleep, but sneaks about at night."

The value of solitary scouting is dwelt upon by the Chief. It does not seem (he writes in 1896) "to be sufficiently realised among us nowadays. One hears but little of its employment since the Peninsula days, when Marbot gave the English officers unqualified praise for their clever and daring enterprise in this line."

There are a few other scattered references to the subject of scouting—a subject frequently uppermost

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at this time in Baden-Powell's mind. "It is not only for savage warfare that I venture to think it is so important, but equally for modern civilised tactics." He goes on to give the "reasons why." Then he says elsewhere: "We English have the talent of woodcraft and the spirit of adventure and independence already inborn in our blood to an extent to which no other nationality can lay claim, and therefore among our soldiers we ought to find the best material in the world for scouts. Were we to take this material and rightly train it in that art whose value has been denoted in the term 'half the battle,' we ought to make up in useful men much of our deficiency in numbers."

Again. "It is curious how newcomers fail to appreciate the necessity of precautions until they have been bitten or nearly bitten, and this they do in spite of all the teachings of history, such as Isandhlwana, the Prince Imperial, Bronker's Spruit, and half a hundred narrow shaves that have never become public. . . . Newcomers . . . think that precautions, to say the least, are derogatory; to see them saunter into danger is, as it were, to watch a child playing on the edge of a cliff."

It is worthy of remark here that when in 1899 he was at work on his famous booklet, "Aids to Scouting," steps were being taken to develop the art of reconnaissance in all British and Indian cavalry regiments. It was to aid the work in this direction that "Aids to Scouting" was published. From the time when Alfred, disguised as a harper, found his way into the camp of the Danes, scouting has had a large part to play in all great military operations. The great Duke of Marlborough, as Baden-Powell reminds us, was a good scout himself, and was so impressed with the value of skilled reconnaissance that even when he was a general commanding a large force he frequently went out on his own account as

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a scout to secretly reconnoitre the enemy's movements.

Baden-Powell quotes in his "Aids to Scouting" some remarkable instances of important results from the work of even one scout. "Perhaps the most notable was the battle of Sadowa, where a single scout of the German army discovered the whole of the enemy's (Austrian) army in a quite unexpected place. The German army was turned that night into the new direction, and next day a battle was fought which decided the whole campaign. In the Franco-German War of 1870 another German scout discovered an Army Corps of the French in an unexpected place, unsupported by other troops. Acting on his information, the Germans were able to surround this force and to destroy it."

In the same booklet he recalls one of his experiences in Matabeleland. "I was," he writes, "riding one day across an open grass plain with one native, scouting. Suddenly we noticed the grass had been recently trodden down. Following up the track for a short distance, it got on to a patch of sandy ground, and we then saw that it was the spoor of several women and boys walking towards some hills about five miles distant, where we believed the enemy to be hiding. Then we saw a leaf lying about ten yards off the track. There were, we knew, trees of this kind at a village fifteen miles distant, in the direction from which these tracks led.

"Probably, then, these women had come from that village, bringing the leaf with them, and had gone to the hills. On picking up the leaf it was damp and smelled of native beer. So we guessed that, according to the custom of these people, they had been carrying pots of native beer on their heads, the mouths of the pots being stopped with bunches of leaves. One of these leaves had fallen out, but we found it ten yards off the track, which showed at the time it fell a wind

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had been blowing. There was no wind now, but there had been at about five A.M., and it was now nearly seven.

"So we read from these signs that a party of women had brought beer during the night from the village fifteen miles distant, and had taken it to the enemy on the hills, arriving there about six o'clock. The men would probably start to drink the beer at once (as it goes sour if kept for long), and would, by the time we could get there, be getting sleepy from it, so we should have a favourable chance of reconnoitring their position. We accordingly followed the women's tracks, found the enemy, made our observations, and got away with our information without any difficulty."

General Buller, in one of his dispatches during the Boer War, wrote: "I suppose our officers will learn the value of scouting in time; but in spite of all one can say, up to this our men seem to blunder into the middle of the enemy and to suffer accordingly." Compare this passage with what Baden-Powell writes in his "Aids." He alludes to the probability of scouting being of even greater value in the future than it has been in the past, "because when acting against an enemy armed with long-range weapons and smokeless powders that render his position invisible, we should be exposing our troops to absolute destruction were we to blunder them boldly against an enemy without knowing exactly how and in what strength he was posted."

The risks run by the scout are instanced by the death of the Prince Imperial, to which reference has been just made. The Prince, when out scouting, halted in a bit of hollow ground with crops round it, through which the Zulus were able to creep up close without being seen. "To carry out their work successfully the scouts have to undergo continual risks and privations, unostentatiously, and without

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the applause of their comrades and officers to give them heart." Baden-Powell compares scouting to playing at football, as a pursuit in which you play not for yourself but for your own side. "You," he says to the scout, "are selected as a forward player. Play the game; play that your side may win. Don't think of your own glorification or your own risks—your side are backing you up."

We can come back now to the story of the Matabele war without any sense of having made an unwarranted digression. How vividly the Chief brings home to one the terrors that beset men when alone amidst mighty hills or in the veldt travelling through an enemy's country! It takes a man not only full of confidence and thoroughly trained but of iron nerve to make the reliable scout. Towards the close of a long description of a perilous piece of scouting with a patrol (one man having been sent ahead and another left to cover the rear), he writes: "The sun has set and darkness has drawn on before we are well out of the defile; but we are now beyond the rebel outposts, and getting nearer home, so there's nothing much to—bang! phit!—and a bullet flies just over our heads! It came from behind; we halt and hear the clatter of hoofs as the man who was left as rearguard comes galloping up the road. A moment later he appears in the dusk, rounding the next turn. He no sooner sees us than he halts, dismounts, drops on one knee, takes aim, and fires straight at us. We shout and yell, but as he loads to fire again, we scatter, and push on along the road, and he comes clattering after us. The explanation is that nervousness, increased by darkness coming on, has sent the man a little off his head, and, ludicrous though it be, it is a little unpleasant for us. None of his comrades cares to tackle him . . . and so we leave him to follow us, keeping a respectful distance. At length the fires twinkle ahead, and tired and hungry,

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we get back to camp. At dawn our missing man turned up—without his horse—it had dropped dead of fatigue. He had a wondrous tale of how he had pursued a host of enemies. The sole reward he got was a ducking in the spruit”—and that apparently put him right again.

Sometimes men when out by themselves on patrol work get lost. Then it happens occasionally that they lose their heads—and tear off in all directions, until they exhaust themselves and their horses, when they become a prey to the enemy or go out of their mind.”

The “big thoughts” of “Impeesa” ranged beyond and through the camps of the enemy; just as we find evidence that the eye of the Chief Scout in daytime is also the eye of the artist and the Englishman. Baden-Powell has a special (and inherited) fondness for the stars. Here is a little soliloquy as he surveys the firmament one night in camp ere closing his eyes in sleep: “And then you take a last look at the glorious star-spangled ceiling overhead, and, until all is blurred in sleep, you see in the dark mantle above you the veil of ignorance that shrouds the earth from heaven’s light beyond—the starry points of brightness that tend to light us are holes made in that covering by the work of good men, whose example and whose teaching encourage us to take our little part in letting in the light in imitation of the greater radiant orb—to lighten up the darkness till the daylight dawns.”

Springtime in Selukwe found him dreaming of springtime in England, and calling the wild flowers of the wooded hills by names dear to every child in the countryside of the homeland.

By 11th September, 1896, the twentieth anniversary of the date on which he entered the army, Baden-Powell was out in the wilds by the banks of the Shangani River, with three of the “Colonial Club.” The occasion suggested reminiscence, and he writes:

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"Once not very long ago, at an afternoon 'At Home' I was handing a cup of tea to an old dowager, who bundled up in a mantle with buttons and beads, and someone noticed that in doing so my face wore an absent look, and I was afterwards asked where my thoughts were at that time. I could only reply that 'my mind was a blank, with a single vision in it, lower half yellow, upper half blue, in other words, the yellow veldt of South Africa, topped with the blue South African sky. Possibly the scent of the tea had touched some memory chord which connected it with my black tin snuff, steaming among the embers of a wood fire. But whatever it was, when my vision is to-day clear, I am looking out on the yellow veldt against the blue sky, the veldt with its green, hazy clumps of corn which is shimmering in the heat, its great expanse only broken by the minute white sand of the river bed and the green reed-bushes which fringe its banks. . .

It is not to think that the novelty of the thing would wear off, that these visions of the veldt would fade away as civilised life grew upon me, that they didn't. They come again at most inopportune moments. . . . and off goes my mind at once, as if with its toys. Oliver Wendell Phillips is quite so true when he says that most of us are 'lost in our lives'; we have our toys, and we play with them with as much zest at eighty as at eight, that in their company we can never grow old. I can't help it if my toys take the form of all that has to do with veldt life, and if they remain my toys till I drop—

"Then here's to our boyhood, its gold and its grey,
The stars of its winter, the dews of its May;
And when we have done with our life-lasting toys,
Dear Father, take care of Thy children, the boys.'

It is not that our toys are the various media adapted to individual tastes through which men may know their God?" And then the mind of the man

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on the veldt takes flight for the moment to the East, and he quotes one of the many curious Indian parallels to Biblical thought.

Passing the glimpses given of Baden-Powell's fondness for children—how pathetic is that story of the poor little child of three, whose murdered body he buried, and one of whose little shoes he kept as a keepsake!—passing the tributes paid to the nursing sisters at Salisbury, and the photographic references to the strange medley of men he met during the Matabele war; noting, in passing, the record that where possible Sunday was made a day for divine service and for rest, and the brief but interesting references to the ancient ruins and rock paintings of Mashonaland, we reserve for final quotation from the Chief's remarkable book this fine impression of Table Mountain as he looked upon it when homeward bound:—

"Table Mountain grows grander and more living every time I see him. His personality grows on one like that of the Taj Mahal at Agra. I can quite understand certain races worshipping a mountain as their idea of divinity. Always steadfast and stupendous. You may turn your back on him and wander away for awhile; but whenever you choose to look back, he is there the same as ever. You have only to go back into his shadow to find a haven from the chilling wind or withering sun. And you may climb up to him, to where he sits above the clouds . . . and when you have reached the summit, you can lay you down in peace upon his breast and contemplate the world below which you have left behind."

It is only at rare intervals that Baden-Powell permits himself to depart from the ordinary narrative of wit, humour, tragedy to transcendental things. But he says enough to show where his thoughts often go if his pen cannot or will not always follow them.

CHAPTER VIII

"Colonel 'B.-P.' and incident of Pretty Girl"—"I am a Nervous Man"—Official Recognition of Services in Rhodesia—Meerut and Natal—The Call to Mafeking.

ON board the *Dunvegan Castle*, which brought Baden-Powell back to England at the close of the Matabele war, were many well-known personages. In addition to Sir Frederick Carrington there were Mr. Cecil Rhodes, Miss Rhodes, and Colonel Frank Rhodes, Sir Charles Metcalfe, Mr. and Mrs. Rochfort Maguire, Olive Schreiner (author of "The Story of an African Farm") and her husband, a host of other notables, and, if report speaks truly, the manuscript of "Trooper Peter Halkett of Mashonaland." "A most interesting shipload."

There was a chiel aboard "taking notes," as well as Baden-Powell, and that chiel was discovered afterwards as "a correspondent of the *Sketch*." It seems that he jotted down, in a tiny pocket-book, notes after this style:—

Col. B.-P. and incident
of the Pretty Girl. Very
funny.

A few days later—

Sports yesterday. Beat
Col. B.-P. final for cock-
fight. Glorious victory!

Again—

Concert last night
splendid. Musical sketch
by Col. B.-P. A1.

Apropos of the first of the foregoing entries, it

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appears the Colonel had by chance left the book he had been reading—Selous' "Sunshine and Storm in Rhodesia," quite a new book then—in the ladies' saloon. The *Sketch* contributor writes:—"I think it was the only copy we had on board, and therefore much sought after. On going to look for it later in the day, it had disappeared. The Colonel was annoyed, but, after asking a few of the passengers, especially the ladies, if they had seen it, apparently took no further notice of the matter. The following morning, to our great amusement, a notice was found pinned on to the green-baize board outside the saloon. It was a sheet of notepaper. On one side was a pen-and-ink sketch of a sweetly pretty girl reading a book, and on the opposite page a ghastly being in petticoats! On the first page, underneath the pretty girl, was written: 'Is the lady'—(I don't know how he found out it *was* a lady!)—'who has stolen Colonel Baking-Powder's book like this?' And on the next page, underneath the atrocity, 'Or like this?' Needless to say, the book was returned, and the following morning appeared a sketch of the pretty girl with an outrageous caricature of the Colonel kneeling at her feet, entitled 'Colonel Baking-Powder returning thanks for the recovery of his book!'"

The Chief has a curious way of making his B's and P's, and this gave the artist away. Later, one of the fair passengers was heard to say to him, alluding to the sketches, "I thought they were very, very rude; and not a bit like you either, were they?" The reply is not on record.

As to the third entry in the note-book, the writer happened to be one of the concert committee, and so approached Baden-Powell to extract the promise of an item for the programme: "Knowing of the Colonel's reputation as an entertainer, I hastened to him first of all. I remember he was sitting at a little table, surrounded with maps, sketches, and

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plans, and reams of foolscap—the foundation, as I learnt after, of his book on the Matabele campaign. ‘Oh, yes!’ he said; ‘put me down for a musical sketch. Eh? Title? Oh, I don’t know anything about the title yet!’ So I had to be content, and after all, it was a good start—‘Colonel Baden-Powell, Musical Sketch.’

“The following night came the concert. Packed house; all local celebrities, &c. Colonel Baden-Powell appeared in the second half of the programme. I happened to be sitting near him at the interval, and asked him if he had thought of a title for his sketch. ‘Oh, I haven’t the remotest idea what it’s going to be about even!’ he replied, laughing. ‘But it will come presently.’ It did. The next turn was a song entitled ‘I am a Nervous Man.’ I don’t think the song was funny—in fact, I have not the remotest idea what it was about; but I do remember yelling ferociously for an encore, in order to give the Colonel—as a committee-man, my trump-card—a chance to think of his sketch. But it was no use, the encore was not forthcoming, and the would-be funny man retired. ‘Next item on programme, Colonel Baden-Powell.’ A roar of applause (he always was popular), and the Colonel quietly rose and walked to the piano.

“‘Ladies and gentlemen,’ he said, ‘I see here on the programme, “Colonel Baden-Powell, Musical Sketch,” but no title. This I regret I have been unable to supply before; but, to tell you the truth—er—I have only just thought of it! With the permission of the artist who has just preceded me, the title of my sketch will be “I am a Nervous Man!”’ And for twenty minutes, with songs, imitations, stories, &c., the man who is now world-famed as the Defender of Mafeking kept that saloon, packed with first, second, and third-class passengers, in one continual roar of laughter and applause.”

The story takes one back to old Godalming days.

A day or two before the close of January, 1897,

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Jubilee Year, Sir Frederick Carrington and Colonel Baden-Powell arrived home in the midst of a trying winter. The latter's special commission expired on 23rd January. On 9th March, the *London Gazette* published the official dispatches of the Matabele campaign. In a dispatch dated Umtali, 12th December, 1896 (in which grateful allusion is made to the facility afforded to the Imperial troops in passing through Portuguese territory to Mashonaland), Sir Frederick observes that, "owing to the dearth of trained special service officers," the work had fallen heavily at first on the officers of the Staff, and adds, "indeed, for all ranks the campaign was an arduous one." There is a long list of names of men who distinguished themselves, and the following entry is made under the heading of "Staff":—"Major and Brevet-Lieutenant-Colonel Baden-Powell, 13th Hussars, Chief Staff Officer. As Chief of the Staff his services were invaluable, and I cannot speak too highly of the assistance he has rendered me. Commanded the advanced force during the whole of its attack on Babayan's stronghold, 20th July. Performed excellent service in the risky work of locating the various impis in the Matopos by day and by night. Commanded successful patrols in clearing the Shangani, Wedza's, and Belingwe districts. Acted as Staff officer to Colonel Plumer throughout the operations in the Matopos." Lieutenant Prince Alexander of Teck, who acted as Staff Officer to Colonel Baden-Powell's patrol to Wedza's (and to whose services Baden-Powell pays generous tribute in his book), is mentioned officially as having proved indefatigable and "particularly useful in the attack on Wedza's stronghold."

Sir Frederick Carrington, who in March went to Gibraltar to take command of the Infantry Brigade there, was, in the Honours Gazette of 7th May, awarded a K.C.B., "in recognition of his services in

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South Africa in 1896." At the same time, Brevet-Lieutenant-Colonel Baden-Powell, who had on 30th April been gazetted to the lieutenant-colonelcy of the 5th Dragoon Guards *vice* Lieutenant-Colonel Maunsell Bowers (who had completed his tenure), was awarded a brevet-colonelcy in that regiment, which was then at Meerut. His friends might have expected something more than this. And one wonders if the court-martial on Uwini, in regard to which Sir Frederick Carrington seems practically and properly to have set aside the instructions of the High Commissioner,* had raised any prejudice against Baden-Powell at headquarters—prejudice which may have been accentuated by the public temper aroused by the Raid inquiry. Baden-Powell never had much public attention concentrated upon him until the siege of Mafeking made his name a household word. Indeed, the same might be said of the operations in which he had been prominently engaged up to the close of 1899. During the Zulu trouble of 1888, Zanzibar and the Parnell Commission largely arrested popular attention. Whilst the Ashanti Expedition was doing its splendid work under the leadership of Sir Francis Scott, England could think of little but Armenia, Venezuela, Chitral, or Mr. Gladstone's retirement. Then, in 1896, the Soudan campaign quite dwarfed the operations in Rhodesia to the public eye.

However, in the North-West Provinces, and later in Natal, Baden-Powell found useful work awaiting him, and did it. And he was on the eve of being promoted to the rank of brigadier-general, when someone was wanted for "extra regimental employ" in South Africa. The post was offered to him one Wednesday in July, 1899, and on the following Saturday he was on his way to the veldt he loved and the fame that has come to him as "the Hero of Mafeking."

* See "The Matabele Campaign," pp. 287-301, 344.

CHAPTER IX

On the Eve of War—Military Resources—Forestalling an Economical Government—Colleagues—Mafeking in 1899—The Boy Scouts—A Band of Brave Women.

" I HOPE they will give me a warm corner." In these words, two days before he left England for South Africa, in July, 1899, Colonel Baden-Powell compressed more than a personal wish ; he implied the inevitability, from his point of view, of war. Certainly his wish had fulfilment. Mafeking was the warmest corner in South Africa during the campaign.

The duty allotted to the Chief was to organise in the Bechuanaland Protectorate a force of Irregulars which should serve to prevent any native rising, and, in the event of war, to protect the whole of the western border of the Protectorate and the southern border of Rhodesia from invasion, thereby, in addition to affording protection to the settlers, preserving communication between Buluwayo and the south. He proceeded to form what is known as the Protectorate Regiment ; and acting under him Lieutenant-Colonel (now Major-General Sir Herbert) Plumer organised the Rhodesia Regiment.

On their part the Boers began massing in the Waterberg and Zoutpansberg districts, and planted outposts at the various drifts facing a handful of men belonging to the Bechuanaland Border Police, who were scattered along some two hundred miles of the Crocodile River.

No one has done more than the defender of Mafeking to deprecate popular enthusiasm in connection with the siege. In speech after speech, and in characteristic language, he has disavowed any

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pretence or right to the name of "hero." With equal, and also characteristic, modesty, he has insisted on sharing with Mahon and Plumer, with his subordinates, and with the civilians in the town all the credit attaching to the defence.

One still hears people ask why the place was defended. Before the war the Home Government did not believe that Mafeking would be attacked. Its strategic importance was not recognised except by those on the spot. And those on the spot were forbidden to take steps to defend it. The result was that they had to lay in a store of arms and ammunition at their own risk. And when they began to fortify the town, they had to pretend that they were building rifle ranges! The Boers decided to reduce Mafeking because they feared the possibility of another Jameson Raid; indeed, they thought that "Dr. Jim" was actually there. But, apart from questions of strategy on either the Boer or the British side, the native factor had to be considered. Had Mafeking fallen, the natives would have risen and seized Rhodesia.

At the commencement of hostilities, Baden-Powell had at his disposal some seven hundred trained men, Colonel Hore's Irregular Cavalry, police, and volunteers. The townsmen, of whom there were about three hundred, were formed into a Town Guard. The population included three hundred white women and children, and about seven thousand natives.

The ordnance comprised two muzzle-loading 7-pounders and half a dozen machine guns. Later an antique 16-pound ship cannon, supposed to have been made in 1770 or 1815, and originally in the possession of some Germans who sold it to the chief of the Baralongs, was unearthed in the native stadt (or kraal) and pressed into the service of the defence.

This ancient piece of metal singularly enough bore upon it the letters "B. P." Weighing rather less than half a ton, the weapon, despite its age, was

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found capable of throwing a 10-pound projectile a distance of two thousand yards with a 2-pound charge of powder. Baden-Powell named the gun "Lord Nelson." Then, though the resources for such work must have been scanty in the extreme, another cannon, called the "Wolf," was cast, and ammunition for it was manufactured in the little town. This weapon, a 16-pound howitzer, the construction of which was carried out under the direction of the commandant and Major Panzera, is now amongst the Royal possessions, King Edward having accepted it as a souvenir.

To Colonel Baden-Powell's Staff was appointed as its chief, Major Lord Edward Cecil, Grenadier Guards. Lord Edward, whose soldierly instincts had been hampered to some degree by a none too robust constitution, won the D.S.O. when serving under Lord Kitchener in the Soudan. With Baden-Powell he shared the responsibility of purchasing supplies for Mafeking far in excess of those deemed sufficient by an economical Government. In this work valuable aid was rendered by the Mayor (Mr. Frank Whiteley) and the firm of Julius Weil & Co.

Lieutenant-Colonel Plumer's force totalled about a thousand men, divided into separate commands.

When General Cronje surrounded Mafeking on 13th October, he had with him eight thousand men and ten modern guns. Baden-Powell and Plumer directed their initial efforts towards keeping as many of the enemy as possible near the border until reinforcements arrived from England; and between them they kept a force which varied from twelve thousand to three thousand fully occupied for two hundred and seventeen days.

The story is an inspiring one. To appreciate the conditions let us look for a moment at the position of Mafeking itself. Since 1896 the place had increased in importance as a centre controlling trade with the Protectorate and the Transvaal. The railway from

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the Cape, of which it was in 1896 the terminus, had been carried far away north to Buluwayo. However, it remained just for all the world like a big store of zinc-roofed and often mud-walled houses, built "promiscuous like" on the open veldt and about five miles in circumference.

Situated 870 miles from Cape Town, 150 miles from Pretoria, eight miles from the Transvaal border on the east, and about twenty miles from Pitsani (Dr. Jameson's "jumping-off" place) on the north-west, Mafeking is watered by the Molopo and a stream called the Ramathlabama; and it is periodically subject to storms, the horrors of which have to be experienced to be believed in.

As Mafeking was originally laid out, at the time of the Warren expedition in 1885, more or less in accordance with military ideas, a good description of it by a military man should enable us the more readily to grasp the difficulties Baden-Powell had to encounter in defending it. Such a description was supplied to the *Morning Post* in 1900 by Major Raillie. "The town," we were told, "is situated on a rise about three hundred yards north of the Molopo, which flows from east to west. It is about three-quarters of a mile square. The railroad runs to the west of the town, due north and south; but immediately south, where it crosses the Molopo by an iron bridge, it inclines rather westward for a distance of two or three miles. The railway embankment north and south of the river thus furnishes cover. From the east and south-east there are heights on the southern bank of the Molopo. To the west again of the railway, and nearly abutting it half a mile south of the Molopo, is the native stadt. It lies on both sides of the river, and on the northern bank commences about half a mile from the railway, then runs in a north-westerly direction for about a mile and a half, and ends about a mile and three-quarters

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west of the railway. The ground in front of the northern end is slightly higher than the stadt, and soon begins to sink away from it, affording good cover to an enemy moving on that side. Near the railway the ground slopes gradually down for a considerable distance to the river. The country round Mafeking to the west, north, and east is flat, but across the Molopo to the south and south-east it commands the town. The ground to the west of the stadt commands the stadt.

"Situated two thousand yards south, and slightly east of the centre of the town, is an old fort of Sir Charles Warren's—Cannon Koppie. This is the key of the position. It is an old circular stone fort, and only by dint of extraordinary exertion had it been possible to bring it up in any degree to a sufficient state of efficiency to enable it to resist even old ordinary 7-pounder guns. It has an interior diameter approximately of twenty-five yards. The native location, occupied by half-breeds, lies directly between Cannon Koppie and the town, on the southern bank of the river. Following the course of the river eastward, about one thousand two hundred yards from the town, and on the northern bank, extend the brickfields (eventually occupied by both parties), while in the same direction, and about three miles and a half from Mafeking, on a ridge, is M'Mellan's Farm, subsequently the Boer headquarters.

"To return to the town. At the north-eastern corner is the convent. Due east of that is the grand stand, about a mile away, while N.N.E. from the convent, and a mile and a half away, is the base of the waterworks, which extend to a trench at their head in the same direction for nearly a mile."

As to the extent of the defences, it has been pointed out by another pen than Major Baillie's that Baden-Powell, by deciding at the outset to hold as large an area of ground as was possible, confused the

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Boer gunners. By the middle of February the line of defences measured about nine miles.

Commencing with the convent, and working westward at the outset, the defences, as described by Major Baillie, were as follows:—The railway line and armoured train protected the north-west front, then nearer to the railway came Fort Victoria, occupied by Railway Volunteers, and in the arc of a circle extending to the north end of the stadt, trenches were occupied by the Protectorate Regiment. The women's laager was established on the edge of the stadt near the B.S.A.P. officers' quarters. This laager was contrived by chaining together a number of waggons and rendering them bomb-proof by means of sandbags and stones. Fences of barbed wire and thorns were fixed in such a manner as to afford resistance to possible rushes on the part of the enemy. Covered trenches were made for the safer conveyance of provisions to the occupants. Of the three hundred women and children who here sought shelter one-half were Dutch.

A refuge camp was formed in the hollow north of the stadt, the northern end of which was held by Captain Vernon and C squadron of the Protectorate Regiment; whilst B squadron, under Captain Marsham, and the natives held the stadt itself, the whole being under Major Godley, who commanded the western outposts. The town was garrisoned by the Cape Police under Captain Brown and Inspector Marsh. These and the Railway Volunteers were under Colonel Vyvyan, while Cannon Koppie was entrusted to Colonel Walford and the B.S.A.P.

"Colonel Baden-Powell retained one squadron of the Protectorate Regiment as reserve under his own immediate control. After the convent had been practically demolished by shell-fire and the railway-line all round the town pulled up or mined by the Boers"—the Commandant designed a circular con-

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vinuation of the railway on which to run an armoured train [*H.M.S. Firefly*]"—a small work was erected at the convent corner, garrisoned by the Cape Police and a Maxim under Lieutenant Murray, who was also put in charge of the armoured train, which had been drawn to the railway-station out of harm's way. The Railway Volunteers garrisoned the cemetery, and had an advanced trench about eight hundred yards to the front and immediately to the right of the line.

"To the westward came Fort Cardigan, and then again Fort Miller; to the south-west was Major Godley's Fort, at the north of the native stadt, with Fort Ayr, and an advanced fort crowning the town to the northern end of the stadt, and, though rather detached, having command of the view for a great distance. To the south of the northern portion of the stadt the Cape Police were entrenched with a Maxim, and five hundred yards to the west front of Inspector Marsh's post lay Limestone Fort, commanding the valley on the other side of which lay the Boer laager and entrenchments. The whole of the edge of the stadt was furnished with loopholes and trenches, and was garrisoned by the native inhabitants. Near the railway were situated two armoured trucks with a Nordenfelt; and Cannon Koppie with two Maxims and a 7-pounder lay to the south-east."

A number of other "forts" were constructed as occasion seemed to require, and garrisoned respectively by from fifteen to forty men of the Town Guard. Bomb-proofs were "constructed everywhere, traverses erected at the end of streets, trenches giving cover leading from every portion of the town and defences," so that it was "possible to walk round the town without being exposed to aim fire." Then telephones were "established in all the headquarter bomb-proofs of outlying forts, and connected with the headquarter bomb-proof." Look-out men and boys were stationed at various points of vantage to watch the enemy's

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guns. As soon as one of these guns was fired the watchers rang a bell, which was a signal to every one near to take shelter in the nearest "bomb-proof."

The boys were got together by Lord Edward Cecil and formed into a cadet corps. He put them in uniform and drilled them; and, to quote the Chief, "a jolly smart and useful lot they were." Until their formation a large number of men were employed in carrying orders and messages, keeping lookout, and acting as orderlies, and so on. These duties were taken over by the cadets, with the result that the men were released to strengthen the firing-line. "And the cadets, under their sergeant-major, a boy named Goodyear, did right good work, and well deserved the medals which they got at the end of the war. Many of them rode bicycles, and we were thus able to establish a post by which people could send letters to their friends in the different forts, or about the town, without going out under fire themselves; and we made postage stamps for these letters which had on them a picture of a cadet bicycle orderly. I said to one of these boys on one occasion, when he came in through rather a heavy fire: 'You will get hit one of these days riding about there that when shells are flying.' And he replied: 'I get al so quick, sir, they'd never catch me.' These boys didn't seem to mind the bullets one bit; they were always ready to carry out orders, though it meant risk to their life every time." *

On the eve of war an effort was made to get all the women and children to a place of safety by rail. Many brave women, however, elected to remain. Some, being good shots, insisted on taking an active part in the defence; others set themselves to learn bandaging, and afterwards formed themselves into a corps of nurses. They did not lose their heads when the siege began.

* "Scouting for Boys." By Sir Robert Baden-Powell. (Pearson, 1910.)

CHAPTER X

The Boer Ultimatum—Kraaipan Disaster—Prompt Reprisal—
Polite Letter-Writing—"Four Hours' Bombardment : One
Dog killed"—General Cronje brings up a Heavy Siege Gun
—"A Last Chance"—Lady Sarah Wilson's Adventures—
Value of Sunday—Christmas Armistice—Game Tree Fort.

THE Boer ultimatum was handed to Mr. Conyngham Greene, the British representative at Pretoria, on 9th October, 1899, and the Transvaal declared war on 11th October.

On the latter date Colonel Baden-Powell dispatched an armoured train, crowded with women and children, from Mafeking to the south. The train was in charge of Captain Ralph Nesbitt, V.C., and fifteen men. Shortly after it had passed Kraaipan, which is about forty miles south of Mafeking, the Boers crossed their border and tore up the line. The journey south, however, was not interrupted, and the refugees gained safety.

Captain Nesbitt had now a more difficult task as he knew (as he did not know, it was an impossible task) to perform. He procured two guns and ammunition to add to the meagre resources of Mafeking, and proceeded on his return journey on 12th October. He succeeded in reaching Maribogo, the fourth station south of Mafeking, and was there warned by the Border Police. Full of the urgency of his mission, however, he decided to do his best to get through, with the result that he played a conspicuous part in the first engagement of the war. At Kraaipan the train was blown up, toppled over, and the Captain and his companions, after standing their ground against a heavy fire from two 9-pounders and

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a large force of the enemy for several hours between midnight and dawn, succumbed only when the Boers brought up some big guns.

Captain Nesbitt and several of his men were wounded; and, with the exception of Flowerday, the engine-driver, who escaped, with the loss of a finger, by creeping unobserved along the dry ditch beside the embankment, all were made prisoners.

Noting that an armoured train must now present special temptations to the enemy, Baden-Powell had two trucks of dynamite, then in the station (and a source of danger), attached to an engine. They were taken out a few miles, when the driver, on sighting the enemy, uncoupled the engine and steamed back promptly. The Boers opened fire, there was a terrific explosion, and if they did not suffer the heavy loss of life made probable, the shock they received must have had a serious effect on their nerves.

On 13th October telegraphic communication with Rhodesia was cut off, and General Cronje began to make his investment of Mafeking felt by the defenders. On the 14th a patrol, under the command of Lord Charles Cavendish-Bentinck, came into collision with the besiegers. Support was sent to them, and an action ensued in which an armoured train, constructed by Lieutenant More, and commanded by Captain Williams, was again prominent. The Boers then retired to consider matters. The same day (Saturday) the Boer commander dispatched a note to Colonel Baden-Powell proposing that Sunday should be observed as a peace day, and that the customary usages of civilised warfare should be adhered to. In an equally courteous reply, to the effect that nothing would give him greater pleasure than to adopt the proffered suggestion, Colonel Baden-Powell drew attention to the fact that his ambulances had been fired on. Thus began a memorable interchange of letters between the rival commanders.

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On Sunday afternoon a member of General Cronje's staff (a Dr. Pirow) approached Mafeking in a landau "drawn by spanking grey horses and carrying the Red Cross." As the bearer of a message from General Cronje, the envoy was accorded all hospitality, and entertained at luncheon with the staff. His mission was to ascertain particulars as to the firing on the British ambulances, and to assure Colonel Baden-Powell that on conviction such an offence would be visited with capital punishment. Unfortunately for the progress of such good intentions as are here indicated, the offence complained of was repeated soon after Dr. Pirow's visit.

On 16th October the Boers cut off the water supply of the town; but this step had been foreseen. The wells had been cleaned and that sunk by Sir Charles Warren reopened. General Cronje again resorted to the pen. Would not Colonel Baden-Powell surrender, "in order to avoid further bloodshed?" The reply came: "Certainly; but when will the bloodshed begin?"

So the Boer leader began busily to perfect his investment. He knew the uses of the spade thoroughly; and began to have trenches dug *en echelon*, a means of approaching a fortified position tried by him so successfully at Potchefstroom in 1881. Furthermore, in addition to keeping up a bombardment with five 7-pounders, one 10-pounder, and two Krupp 12-pounders, and a 94-pounder Creusot gun, General Cronje sent to Pretoria for a Krupp 100-pounder.

On the 20th Colonel Hore had a successful brush with a section of the investing forces. Next day there came from Colonel Baden-Powell the historic message: "21st October. All well. Four hours' bombardment. One dog killed." Bomb-proofs, hitherto regarded with a certain amount of disrespect, now began to be more numerous in the town. The

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Boer General meant to keep the defenders active. On 24th October the convent, which had been turned into a hospital, was struck several times. One shell broke through a wall near to a portrait of the Queen without damaging the portrait, and this was taken as a good omen. General Cronje, busy now with gun and spade, was yet unwilling altogether to discard the pen. Hence another message summoning the garrison to surrender. The messenger found Colonel Baden-Powell asleep. The answer was again annoying, if humorous: "Tell General Cronje I will let him know when we have had enough." The retort took the form of a thirty-six hours' shell fire, three hundred shells being sent into the town. The bombardment was followed by two desperate attempts to carry the defences by assault.

General Cronje seems now to have been convinced that bombardment was after all the better means to adopt. So he acquainted Colonel Baden-Powell with this view, emphasising in doing so the character of the siege gun he was about to bring to bear. Baden-Powell expressed himself as being very much obliged, and went on to supply information he thought might be interesting to those in the Boer lines. The town, he informed General Cronje, was surrounded by mines, some arranged to explode automatically, some by wire from headquarters.

On 27th October, as the shelling continued, a night attack on a section of the Boer trenches was planned. Fifty-three men under Captain Fitz-Clarence, supported by two parties of Cape Police under Lieutenant Murray, moved off at eight o'clock, the objective being Commandant Louw's position on the Mateking side of the racecourse. The squadron (D. of the Protectorate Regiment) was ordered to use cold steel only, while the Police were to enfilade the Boer trenches from the rear. The surprise of the Boers was complete; the confusion into which they were

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thrown perfect. The trenches, however, were untenable, and when the retirement had been carried out it was found that Captain Fitz-Clarence and Lieutenant S. Winburne had been slightly wounded, as were eleven others; that six had been killed, and that two were "missing." Of the hundred men killed on the Boer side, fifty are computed to have been shot by their comrades during the confusion.

On 30th October General Cronje tendered, under a flag of truce, "a last chance" to Colonel Baden-Powell, who was enjoined to surrender at the eleventh hour. The Boer General also made a direct appeal to the Baralong chief, Wessels Montsioa, urging him to send his women and children out of Mafeking. The chief, in his reply, said: "For himself he was a subject of the Queen, but the Queen had not instructed him to fight General Cronje. Her orders to him were to keep quiet. This he would do, but he could not find any safer place for the women and children than his own kraal."

On 31st October General Cronje organised a determined attempt to capture the fort on Cannon Koppie. At a distance of between three and four thousand yards from the Koppie earthworks were thrown up, whence at dawn a heavy artillery fire was directed. Under cover of this a storming party pushed forward to within three hundred yards of the fort. The engagement was a critical one for the garrison, but Colonel Walford and his men made the most of their opportunities; and though they had only one 7-pounder and two Maxims to oppose to the heavy Boer artillery, they inflicted heavy losses on the enemy, who eventually had to beat a retreat. Captain the Hon. D. H. Marsham, Captain Pechell, and two sergeants-major of the B.S.A. Police were killed, and five men severely wounded.

The first number of the *Mafeking Mail*, issued the following day (and to be "Issued Daily, Shells Per-

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mitting"), contained confident hopes of a speedy end to the siege.

The bombardment of Mafeking continued during November, unrelieved except by minor disputes between outposts and "sniping" on both sides. On 6th November Colonel Baden-Powell reported his total loss as two officers and seventeen men killed, and four officers and twenty-nine men wounded. Confidence as well as fear is infectious; and the defenders had a splendid example in the cheery bearing of the commandant. "The Colonel is always smiling, and is a host in himself," wrote one of the correspondents on the 15th, describing how "B.-P." "went whistling down the street, deep in thought, pleasing of countenance, bright and confident." Lady Sarah Wilson, in her "Memories," has given some impressions of the lighter side of the story.

Lady Sarah Wilson was with her husband, Captain Gordon Wilson, A.D.C. to the Chief. Lady Sarah was at Buluwayo when the first rumours of war broke out, and she left for Mafeking, intending to go to Cape Town and thence home. Baden-Powell, fearing for her safety, sent her by night across the Kalahari Desert to Mosita, where she heard in the distance the first shots fired in the war—those which destroyed the armoured train at Kraaipan. Later, distracted by lack of news, she went to Vryburg, where, however, her stay was short, as her presence excited suspicion. In Mosita, to which she returned, reports were current that she was a man dressed as a woman, and also that she was "a granddaughter of Queen Victoria," sent out specially by Her Majesty to inform her of the proceedings of her rebellious subjects. So, taking her courage in both hands, she marched boldly to the camp of General Snyman (who succeeded General Cronje in command on 18th November) with the request that she should be exchanged for a Boer woman then detained in the

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town She was received with perfect civility, but the only condition of exchange to which the enemy would listen was that the substitute should be a horse-thief named Viljoen, then in gaol. For her part Lady Sarah declined to entertain the proposal; but in the end, on the representations of Lord Edward Cecil, it was agreed to, and Lady Sarah entered the Mafeking lines to the sound of "three ringing English cheers." She has no fault to find with her treatment at the Boer quarters, which was rough but friendly.

When Lady Sarah re-entered Mafeking the siege had already been going on for two months. There was a regular routine. Shelling began in the early morning and was suspended towards noon, beginning in earnest again about four. The bomb-proof shellers were connected by telephone.

"Often," she has told us, "my telephone would then ring up with the message: 'The gun is loaded and pointed at the town.' Almost simultaneously a panting little bell, not much louder than a London muffin bell, but heard distinctly all over the town in the clear atmosphere, would give tongue, and luckless folk who were promenading the streets had about three seconds to seek shelter, the alarm being sounded as the flash was seen by the look-out."*

Lady Sarah describes how "A monkey belonging to the post-office, who generally spent the day on the top of a pole to which he was chained, would, on hearing the alarm-bell, rapidly descend from his perch, and, in imitation of the human beings, whom he saw taking shelter, quickly pop under a large empty biscuit-tin. Dogs also played a great part in the siege. One, belonging to the base commandant, was wounded no less than three times; a rough Irish terrier accompanied the Protectorate Regiment in all its engagements; and a third amused itself by

* "South African Memories." Arnold, 1909.

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running after the small Maxim shells, barking loudly, and trying to retrieve pieces. On the other hand, the Resident Commissioner's dog was a prudent animal, and whenever she heard the alarm-bell she would leave even her dinner half-eaten, and bolt down her master's bomb-proof."

Coincident with the departure of General Cronje for the south, natives were brought in large numbers to assist the Boers in digging trenches. As these trenches got nearer and nearer to the town, so they approached and were approached by the counter-trenches of the defenders. On 18th November an attempt was made to draw out the garrison by a feint. The Boers advanced in force, and then appeared to beat a hasty retreat. Baden-Powell's scouts, however, found numbers of the enemy concealed; so, reported the Colonel, "we sat tight."

Early in December, taking a leaf from General Cronje's "Polite Letter Writer," Colonel Baden-Powell admonished his besiegers as to the penalty that awaited them should they continue to remain under arms against Great Britain. In a short time the Boer Republics would be in the hands of the English, and no sacrifice on their part would suffice to prevent that consummation. "Is it worth while," he asked them, "losing your lives in a vain attempt to stop the British invasion, or to take a town beyond your borders which, if taken, will be of no use to you? I may tell you," proceeded the indomitable Colonel, "that Mafeking cannot be taken by sitting down and looking at it, for we have ample supplies for several months. The Staats Artillery has done very little damage, and we are now protected by both troops and mines." The burghers, to whom the communication was sent direct, were advised to return to their farms and families, for the garrison intended shortly to take the offensive.

General Snyman was very angry. He regarded

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the letter as impudent—in the first place because it was addressed to the burghers and not to him personally; in the second place because it was written in “bad Dutch.” His retort to the Colonel, freely rendered, was “Come out and try.” There were the burghers—let the British commander see if he could drive them away. Baden-Powell quietly went on with his preparations.

How the Sunday respite was appreciated is witnessed by all the letters that got through. “Pale women and children emerge from the laager, dressed in their Sunday best, the shops are open and do a lively trade, services go on in the little English Church, and everyone is able safely to ride and walk about the town and outside on the veldt within our lines. So different is the aspect of everything that one could hardly believe it is the same town.”

Mr. Angus Hamilton, in his correspondence as representative of *Black and White*, dwells upon the subject of the Sabbath and on Colonel Baden-Powell's immense capacity for inventing entertainments as a set-off to the hideous nerve-strain that preceded and followed the Sunday's grace. “Where in England you people are saying, ‘Oh, bother Sunday!’ ‘How like a Sunday!’ we say, ‘Thank God, it is Sunday!’ . . . We live in every second of the hours which constitute the Sunday, and upon the passing of the day it is as though we have come into a world which upon the morrow has been turned over.”

In a letter dated 12th December, which got through in a quill secreted in a Kaffir's pipe, Colonel Baden-Powell wrote to his mother: “All going well with me. To-day I have been trying to find any Old Carthusians in the place to have a Carthusian dinner together, as it is Founder's Day; but so far, for a wonder, I believe I am the only one among the odd thousand people here. This is our sixtieth day of

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the siege, and I do believe we're beginning to get a little tired of it ; but I suppose, like other things, it will come to an end some day. I have got such an interesting collection of mementoes of it to bring home. I wonder if Baden [his brother, Major Baden-Powell] is in the country? What fun if he should come up to relieve me! I don't know if this letter will get through the Boer outposts, but if it does, I hope it will find you very well and flourishing."

Dingaan's Day—15th December—opened with heavy firing, and further assaults were expected by the garrison ; but no great damage was done, though the first shell, fired at half-past two A.M., found lodgment in the office of the headquarters staff, and there were some narrow escapes. About this time the *Standard and Diggers' News* cheerfully announced that the town was "flat"; and the *English Review of Reviews* anticipated that Mafeking would probably surrender at Christmas.

Christmas Day came and went. There was a mutual cessation of hostilities. For the children Lady Sarah Wilson and a staff of eager assistants provided a Christmas tree.

Colonel Baden-Powell meanwhile determined to assault Game Tree Fort. He had personally reconnoitred the position by night. Rich pasturage divided the town and the fort. The Colonel hoped to stop the fire from the fort, and trusted also to be able to open communications with Rhodesia, where Colonel Plumer was keeping the enemy employed. All his care, however, was frustrated through native treachery. The aggregate of the force engaged was a trifle under two hundred ; but about eighty men only formed the storming party. Of these twenty-one were killed (including Captains Sandford and Vernon) and thirty-three wounded. Four of the wounded afterwards succumbed to their injuries. The day was known thereafter as "Black Boxing Day."

CHAPTER XI

New Year's Eve—A Pen-Portrait Drawn in Makeing—"Aids to Scouting"—A Boer Tribute

THE New Year was ushered in by as many as could be spared from the forts and trenches gathering together within the shadow of the little English church for a short and simple devotional service. The scene is impressively described by Mr. Angus Hamilton. "It had been raining during the evening; the air was fresh and fragrant, and the ground was very damp. The men came in their cloaks; they carried their rifles and wore their bandoliers. There were perhaps one hundred of them. When everything was ready the great stillness of the night was broken gently by a prelude from the harmonium, which, dropping into a low tone, became a mere accompaniment to the human voices. Then the volume of music grew somewhat fuller, until it carried in its depths the voices of the singers merged into one torrent of stirring melody; then there was a fresh pause, and as the echoes of the hymn died away, lingering in the rafters of the building until countless spirits seemed to be taking up the refrain, the voice of the preacher broke out in words which manfully endeavoured to cheer the congregation. We stood and listened, rapt with an attention which gave more to the scene than to the exhortations of the man, and waiting for the time to sing the National Anthem.

"The National Anthem, sung amid these surroundings, was incomparably beautiful, seeming to strengthen the irresolute, even cheering those who

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were already strong, and imparting to everyone a happier frame of mind and a greater spirit of contentment. Scenes on a smaller scale, but identical in purpose, were enacted at almost every one of our posts, and the hour of midnight must have borne to the watchful sentries of the enemy some slight knowledge of the pleasing duty upon which the garrison was engaged."

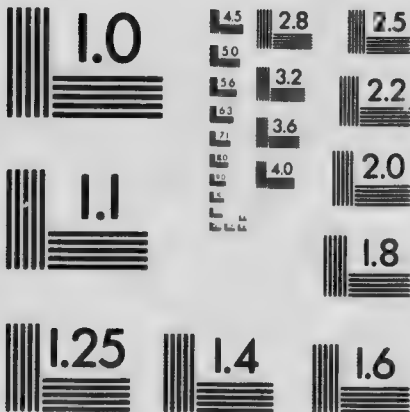
General Cronje paid a brief visit to Mafeking again with the New Year, and got to work with his big guns. There was trouble also with the natives. The Baralong chief, Wessels, had to be deposed, and the reins of office handed to his two chief councillors. Then there was unrest caused by native spies, whose repression was now more than ever necessary after the affair of Game Tree Fort.

By the middle of January private stores were exhausted. The authorities had taken charge of all eatables. Flour had given out. For fresh meat dependence had to be placed on raided cattle. Every commodity commanded abnormal prices. The garrison was placed upon half-rations—half a pound of meat and the same quantity of bread per day. The whole available milk supply was, on 18th January, commandeered for the sick and wounded and women and children. An order was issued that any horses shot by the enemy were to be handed over to the commissariat. Baden-Powell tried to avert all sickness that finds its origin in depression of spirits, and his efforts were ably seconded. Thus on the 21st—a Sunday—"a baby show was held, and prizes were given for the best babies born during the siege." And there was some glimmer of satisfaction just now; for the Colonel had been able to report that the enemy had been pushed back on three sides out of rifle range of the town; and had been furthermore obliged to remove their



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heavy siege gun because of the fire directed upon it from the advanced British trenches.

On 20th January the Mafeking correspondent of the *Times* sent to the leading journal a graphic personal impression of the Commandant:—"Colonel Baden-Powell," he wrote, "is young, as men go in the Army, with a keen appreciation of the possibilities of his career. His countenance is keen, his stature short, his features sharp and smooth. He is eminently a man of determination, with great physical endurance and capacity, and extraordinary reticence. His reserve is unbending, and one would say that fever would be the only heat which would permeate his body. He does not go about freely, since he is tied to his office through the multitudinous cares of his command, and he is chiefly happy when he can snatch the time to escape upon one of those nocturnal, silent expeditions, which alone calm and assuage the perpetual excitement of his present existence. Outwardly, he maintains an impenetrable screen of self-control, observing with a cynical smile the foibles and caprices of those around him.

"He seems ever bracing himself to be on guard against a moment in which he should be swept by some unnatural and spontaneous enthusiasm, in which by a word, by an expression of face, by a movement, or in the turn of a phrase, he should betray the rigours of the self-control under which he lives. Every passing townsman regards him with curiosity not unmingled with awe. Every servant in the hotel watches him, and he, as a consequence, seldom speaks without a preternatural deliberation and an air of incisive finality. He seems to close every argument with a snap, as though the steel manacles of his ambition had checkmated the emotions of the man in the instincts of the officer. He weighs each remark before he utters it, and suggests by his manner, as by his words, that he has



OUR YOUNGEST LINE OF DEFENCE.

BOY SCOUT (to Mrs. BRITANNIA): "FEAR NOT, GRAN'MA; NO DANGER CAN BEFALL YOU' NOW. REMEMBER, I AM WITH YOU!"

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considered the different effects it might conceivably have on any mind as the expression of his own mind.

"As an officer, he has given to Mafeking a complete and magnificent security, to the construction of which he has brought a very practical knowledge of the conditions of Boer warfare, of the Boers themselves, and of the strategic value of the adjacent areas. His espionage excursions to the Boer lines have gained him an intimate and accurate idea of the value of the opposing forces and a mass of *data* by which he can immediately counteract the enemy's attack.

"He loves the night, and after his return from the hollows in the veldt, where he has kept so many anxious vigils, he lies awake, hour after hour upon his camp mattress in the verandah, tracing out, in his mind, the various means and agencies by which he can forestall their move, which, unknown to them, he had personally watched.

"He is a silent man. In the noisy day he yearns for the noiseless night, in which he can slip into the vistas of the veldt, an unobtrusive spectator of the mystic communion of tree with tree, of twilight with darkness, of land with water, of early morn with fading night, with the music of the journeying winds to speak to him and to lull his thoughts.

"As he makes his way across our lines the watchful sentry strains his eyes a little more to keep the figure of the Colonel before him, until the undulations of the veldt conceal his progress. He goes in the privacy of the night, when it is no longer a season of moonlight, when, although the stars are full, the night is dim. The breezes of the veldt are warm and gentle, impregnated with the fresh fragrances of the Molopo, although, as he walks with rapid, almost running, footsteps, leaving the black blur of the town for the arid and stony areas to the west, a new wind meets him, a wind that is clear and keen and

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dry—the wind of the wastes that wanders for ever over the monotonous sands of the desert.

“He goes on, never faltering, bending for a moment behind a clump of rocks, screening himself next behind some bushes, crawling upon his hands and knees. His head low, his eyes gaze straight upon the camp of the enemy; in a little, he moves again, his inspection is over, and he either changes to a fresh point or startles some dozing sentry as he slips back into town.”

The portrait is in keeping with that conjured up by a perusal of Baden-Powell's books, especially by his history of the Matabele trouble in 1896, and by that brilliant booklet, “Aids to Scouting,” the proof-sheets of which he corrected in Mafeking and returned on the last day that communications remained open with the outside world. In “Aids to Scouting” (which by the way has been translated for use in the German army) is concentrated the essence of a wide experience. Had the lessons it contains—lessons urged by Colonel Baden-Powell long before the “Aids” appeared—been taken to heart by those for whose benefit they were enjoined, surely it is not too much to say that some of the most depressing incidents of the war would have been avoided. The foreigner has not failed to make use of the book—the golden rule of which is “practise in peace time”—and even the Boers themselves did not disdain to consult the work of one whom they referred to as the first *rooi-baatje* they had met who could fight in their fashion and give them points in the contest.

CHAPTER XII

Message from the Queen—The Chief Scout's Cheery Messages
—Anxiety at Home—The Relief—How the News was
Received.

BEFORE the end of January, 1900, the receipt of a message from Lord Roberts promising relief "in a few weeks," and congratulating the garrison, did much to instil new life into the defence; and a telegram was sent to Queen Victoria by the Mayor, expressing loyal devotion to Her Majesty and the resolve to maintain the Queen's supremacy in Mafeking. The *Mafeking Mail* of 25th January thus refers to Lord Roberts' message: "Lord Roberts telegraphs to the Colonel commanding his warm congratulations on Mafeking's plucky defence; he only wishes he could get help to us at once, and earnestly hopes we can manage to hold out for a few weeks more, when the situation will be changed. This we can do for a few *months* more if required."

On 26th January Bradley's Hotel was partially wrecked by a shell. Later in the afternoon Lady Sarah Wilson, and Captain Wilson, both of whom had been under medical care, were seated with Major Goold Adams in a passage in the upper storey of the convent, when a shell burst about four feet over their heads, covering them with a pile of bricks and rubbish, but fortunately they escaped with a few bruises.

About this time Colonel Baden-Powell found it necessary to institute a paper currency for amounts ranging from three shillings to threepence. He also authorised the issue by the local branch of the Standard Bank of notes of £1 and £5 face value

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respectively on banks outside the limits of the Cape Colony.

February opened quietly. On the 3rd Colonel Baden-Powell got a message through his lines. It reached the officer in command at Buluwayo on the 9th: "All well here. On the 23rd ult. the enemy moved north-east, supporting a laager 4500 yards from town. We pushed our advance works in that direction, and mounted 'Lord Nelson,' an old naval smooth-bore in the emplacement, 3100 yards from the enemy. On the evening of 29th January it was unmasked, and shelled the enemy's camp with complete success. Next morning the laager was moved back two miles. Our casualties for the past two days from shell-fire were three killed and two wounded."

On 11th February Colonel Baden-Powell issued an order to the effect that the Commander-in-Chief had requested him to endeavour to hold the town against the enemy until the middle of May. It was computed by the Commandant that this would be possible; and though his order was issued on the morrow of a trying night in the trenches, it was accepted with the utmost cheerfulness by garrison and people.

The same day Lady Sarah Wilson presented to the troops several Union Jacks that had been worked by the ladies in the town.

On the 14th there was a lull in the bombardment, and excitement was observable in the Boer camp. This condition of affairs continued for several days. Its cause was the subject of all sorts of conjectures on the part of the garrison. The lull was coincident with the relief of Kimberley after a siege of one hundred and twenty-three days. On the 20th a soup kitchen was opened to supply the native labourers—some six hundred in number—with nourishment.

When a horse was killed they left nothing of him

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but the hair scraped off the skin, and to this day the Chief tells us that he cannot decide to what useful purpose it might have been put. The shoes were sent to the shell factory to make shells; the tail and mane to the hospital to make mattresses; the meat was cut off the bones, which, with the head, went into the cauldron to be stewed many hours and then made into broth. They had a fine mincing machine which enabled them to chop the meat fine, and so serve each man with six inches of sausage; the bones were pounded with a hammer to eke out the supply of bread, which, by the way, would have consisted chiefly of bone dust, had not a Scottish crofter named Sims introduced a method of making nourishing mixture from oat bran.

Typhoid, diphtheria, and malaria were now "helping the enemy's guns." But a diary jotting contains this entry: "We have received a message from the Queen to-day with great pride that Her Majesty should think of us in this little hamlet of the veldt. It helps us to eat our black bread and sweetens sickening horseflesh, when we know that the Queen herself is watching and waiting for news from Mafeking. Such a message makes men willing to endure disease and even death patiently. Every one feels that by continuing to hold out against a subtle and relentless foe who has broken all the laws of civilised warfare and disregarded the provisions of the Council of Geneva, Mafeking will not have suffered in vain."

The nurses found a ready helper in the Commandant. One officer, writing home, declared that it was one of the finest sights in the town to see the Chief with a child in his arms, soothing its pain and comforting it in its grief. The Commandant's solicitude for all in hospital was characteristically thorough. Each day during the siege he found time to visit the sick and wounded.

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Up to 19th February two hundred and ninety-two persons had been killed, wounded, or had died of disease. A *Times* telegram dated 5th March stated: "The water supply is no longer free from parasitical contamination. . . . Deaths of women in the laager are of daily occurrence owing to inefficient sanitation, which causes malignant fevers, and the absence of nourishing food." On the other hand, the Boers had been "completely expelled" from the brickfields and an ordnance factory had been established.

On 27th February Cronje surrendered at Paardeberg. On 28th February General Buller, following Lord Dundonald and the Natal Carbineers, entered Ladysmith, and the investment of that place was put an end to after lasting one hundred and twenty days. On 15th March Lord Roberts took possession of Bloemfontein.

Colonel Baden-Powell was no less prompt to use the news of Cronje's surrender as a means of disheartening his foes than to post it for the encouragement of the town. From his advanced trenches beyond the brickfields he supplied the invading Boers with information concerning Paardeberg by placing copies of the *Mafeking Mail* round large stones and casting these unpleasant reminders into the enemy's lines. Another instance of his ingenuity is chronicled. The shells taken from Dr. Jameson's column at Doornkop were fired into Mafeking. It was grim irony. But the irony did not end here. The missiles were collected, melted down, charged, and hurled once more at the Boers.

General Snyman made another attempt to ambuscade the garrison by the device of a pretended retreat but once again the author of "Aids to Scouting" was too much for the Boer general.

On 31st March Lieutenant-Colonel Plumer, with two hundred and seventy mounted men, a few unmounted infantry, and one Maxim, penetrated for a

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second time south of Lobatsi. Leaving the unmounted men and the machine gun at Ramathlabama he advanced to within six miles of Mafeking. Simultaneously there was a sortie from the town. After an hour's heavy fighting Plumer had once more to retire. The gallant commandant of the Rhodesian Regiment was himself wounded in the right arm and his horse was shot under him.

Between 31st March and 5th April Mafeking had a comparative respite. General Snyman had taken off some of his men and guns to bar the road of the relief column from the north. On 5th April he returned, having with him the son of General Cronje. His return was signalled by a bombardment of the severest character. On 2nd April it was estimated that, so far, fourteen hundred 94-pound shells and several thousand smaller projectiles had been fired into the town.

During General Snyman's absence it would appear that many of the Boers left under Commandant Botha sent "messages of goodwill" to Englishmen in the town who had formerly been their friends. Furthermore, Commandant Botha had been "very civil" about Captain MacLaren, who was then lying dangerously wounded in their laager two miles from the town. And here we have another striking story to add to the romance of Masonry in the battlefield: "Owing to Captain MacLaren being a Freemason, and to his meeting with brother masons among the Boers," he "received every attention," the Boers sending daily bulletins as to his condition.

On 11th April, after a heavy bombardment of the town, General Snyman made an unsuccessful attempt to take Fort Abrams by an assault. This was followed by a further bombardment.

The hearts of the garrison, however, had been cheered by something more than the nutritious if "slightly sour" sowan (or oat bran) porridge of the

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ingenious Scotsman Sims. A message (carried through the Boer lines by Lieutenant Smitheman, Colonel Plumer's scout) was received by Colonel Baden-Powell from Queen Victoria, in which Her Majesty congratulated the Commandant and his men on their gallant stand, and trusted that they would be able to hold out until the relief, which the Queen hoped was then near at hand, reached them. Coincidentally with the Royal missive there arrived from Lord Roberts a message asking Colonel Baden-Powell to hold out till 18th May.

On the 7th of May Colonel Baden-Powell sent to Lord Roberts another cheery message: "All going well; fever decreasing; garrison cheerful; food will last till about 10th June."

Meanwhile, people at home were depressed by a variety of alarmist rumours, among these being a very circumstantial report to the effect that Baden-Powell was dead. In the House of Commons, on the afternoon of 17th May, the Under-Secretary of State for War said: "I regret that I am unable to give the House the only news which could relieve the anxiety as to the condition of the heroic garrison. Perhaps I may say, although it is a consideration that must have occurred to hon. members, that if the event which we so earnestly desire takes place, the intelligence of it cannot reach us for two days, and very possibly not for five days." In reply to Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, who asked if there was any information as to the reported repulse of the British and a serious assault on Mafeking, Mr. Wyndham added: "No. That report comes from a Boer source, and I am not prepared to criticise it."

At this date all news from Mafeking sent south had to be carried by dispatch riders to Warrenton, a place 170 miles distant, and there put on the field telegraph. News sent north had to be carried to Ootsi, cabled to Beira *via* Lorenzo Marquez, and thence wired to England.

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"18th May" came at last. It was evident as the day drew towards evening that London had within its boundaries more than its normal number of inhabitants. Passers-by in the street had the aimless yet anxious look of those who wait. By nine o'clock at night it appeared as if the long series of deceptive rumours had taken away the heart of the people. There was only one more paper to be issued—the ten o'clock edition of the *Evening News*. That would do "after the theatres."

In Pall Mall, half swallowed up in the gloom that seemed always to wrap the old War Office, a small crowd kept vigil. They stood as closely as they were permitted to do to the railings through which could be seen on the door of the central entrance to the building the familiar legend "No News." The solitary Guardsman on duty was given scarce space enough in which to perform his "sentry-go." The police at the open outer gate were bombarded with questions. Among the chief callers was the Duke of Connaught.

The large hand of the clock in the lobby crept slowly down the dial and turned once more on its monotonous course. Without, the little crowd was beginning to diminish—when on the night breeze westward borne there came a steady sound which rose above the dull roar of the distant traffic. Even those whom long waiting had made sceptical paused to listen.

"Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the wind."

But there was no doubt about that cry. Screamed by the leathern throats of the night news runners, taken up by the voices of a small but enthusiastic body of men, women, and boys, making their way to the centre of official information, it was: "Relief of Mafeking!" The *Evening News* 10 P.M. edition had come out before its usual time with the momen-

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tous news, which was blazoned forth on contents-bills of red, white, and blue. In the space reserved for "Latest News" was printed the following :—

RELIEF OF MAFEKING.

MAFEKING HAS BEEN RELIEVED.

FOOD HAS ENTERED THE GARRISON.

ENEMY DISPERSED.

—Reuter.

The portals of the War Office, however, still bore the legend "No News." Within, the courteous principal in charge, Mr. H. J. Gibson, could add nothing to the news in the way of corroboration.

Turning eastward again, one found the Strand and Fleet Street half-suffocated as it were with suppressed excitement. The moment of *abandon* had not yet come. But, everywhere, young and old were eagerly scanning the evening paper just referred to, which, by the way, soon had its rivals. Meanwhile, crowds had collected outside the various newspaper offices, in the windows of which the main fact of the relief had been pasted up. The *Daily Graphic* office displayed a picture of Baden-Powell wreathed with intertwined Union Jacks.

Soon we learned how the good news came. It had been travelling over the cables from Pretoria since 11.35 A.M. It found its way to Reuter's offices in Old Jewry at 9.17 P.M. Thence it was dispatched to every corner of the globe; it was flashed to the Exchange offices and was soon being worked off on the tape machines in clubland. The historic message is as follows :—

"PRETORIA, 18th May.—It is officially announced that when the laagers and forts around Mafeking had

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been severely bombarded the siege was abandoned by the Boers. A British force advancing from the south then took possession of the town.—REUTER."

By 10.30 P.M. all London had given itself up to the joy of the occasion. Within a few minutes after the telegram had been posted up at the Mansion House, traffic was impossible. From the Mansion House to Hyde Park Corner, where Mrs. Baden-Powell was serenaded by ten thousand people, the city had burst into bunting. Flags flew from roofs and windows. Vehicles of all descriptions were bedizened with Union Jacks. The Lord Mayor came out on to the balcony of the Mansion House and addressed the cheering thousands assembled there. His few words took many minutes in the delivery. They were punctuated with cheers for Baden-Powell and the singing of the National Anthem.

As the telegrams came in on the following day, it was made known to us in London that the relief of Mafeking was the relief of the kingdom and of all parts of the Empire. The joy was lasting as it was deep and genuine. Ample evidence of this was found in the churches on the Sunday.

The relief column, led by Brevet-Colonel Bryan Thomas Mahon, D.S.O., of Soudan fame, was a composite force of about 2300 picked Light Horse from Ladysmith and Kimberley, a section of Fusiliers, and a detachment of Royal Horse Artillery with "pom-poms." Major Baden-Powell, the Chief's brother, was with the column.

Leaving Barkley West on 4th May the column covered 130 miles in five days. Vryburg was reached on 9th May. On Sunday, 13th May, the Boers attacked the force in thick bush near Kraaipan, and were routed. On the same day Lieutenant Eloff conducted an assault on Mafeking. This also failed, Eloff himself being captured.

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On 15th May Colonel Mahon joined Colonel Plumer at Jan Massibi's, a spot 25 miles west of Mafeking and some 200 miles from Barkley West. Colonel Plumer had on the 14th been joined by some Canadians and Queenslanders belonging to General Carrington's command. The enemy was attacked and utterly defeated after heavy fighting, and Mafeking was entered by the relieving force at 4 A.M. on 17th May. At 9 A.M., the relief and defence forces combined moved out, attacked the enemy's head laager, shelled the enemy out, and to quote Baden-Powell's official report to Lord Roberts, "nearly captured Snyman." When the relief force entered, there were in Mafeking ten days' rations on the reduced scale which had been in force for two months previously. If the relief had failed, it was the Commander's intention to break out and join the force under Colonel Plumer.

In the course of an interview Colonel Baden-Powell was asked by Reuter's correspondent in Mafeking for a message to the British people. He replied then (as he has often stated since) that an exaggerated idea had been entertained of the importance of his personality, whereas, he proceeded, "I look on myself as the figure-head of the good ship *Mafeking*. It has been her stout canvas and the shape of her brave hull that have really shoved the ship along and brought her safely through her stormy cruise; so, whenever I read nice things people say about me, I take it that they said them inasmuch as I am the head and the representative of the garrison."

Mrs. Baden-Powell received a telegram from her sons at Mafeking, dated 17th May. It stated that Major Baden Baden-Powell had that day entered the town, and that all was going well. The message was signed by both brothers, the signatures being "Stephenson and Baden." The former had to congratulate his brother on a most happy escape.

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During the operations of the relieving column a Boer bullet smashed a watch in the Major's pocket, but inflicted no wound.

Among the earliest of the innumerable telegrams of congratulation that reached Mrs. Baden-Powell was a gracious message from Queen Victoria, whose appointment of the Hero of Mafeking to the rank of Major-General "for distinguished service in the field" was gazetted on 22nd May.

CHAPTER XIII

Baden-Powell in the Field—The Operations against De Wet—
Reception in Cape Town—Letters Written at Rustenburg
—A Message to Young England.

EVENTS moved rapidly after that memorable Thursday in May when Mafeking was relieved. "If Baden-Powell gets out," a prominent Boer had been heard to say, "we are done for." The words contained more than their surface meaning. The freedom of the "Eagle" signified more than his liberty. The relief was an item, or rather a pivot, of Lord Roberts's plans. Within a week, on the day on which the Mafeking garrison, led by its redoubtable commander, celebrated the Queen's birthday, Lord Roberts formally annexed the Orange Free State, and the province of President Steyn became known as the Orange River Colony. On 31st May Johannesburg was occupied by the British. Lord Roberts led the Guards into Pretoria on 5th June. On 25th October the Transvaal was formally annexed to the dominions of Queen Victoria, to become in due course (with Cape Colony and Natal) part of the Union of South Africa. On 19th September Lord Roberts reported to the Secretary of State for War: "There is nothing now left of the Boer army but a few marauding bands." Meanwhile, Holland prepared to receive the ex-President; and Boers and their supporters averred that "a time would come" when Europe would insist on the restitution to Mr. Kruger of all his former power. But Europe remained silent.

As I have said, events moved rapidly. And Major-



Photo by]
BOYS AT THE CHIEF SCOTT'S OLD SCHOOL, THE CHAPTERHOUSE, CELEBRATING THE RELIEF OF
MAEKING, MAY, 1900. [S. Galt, Southern.

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General Baden-Powell moved with them, proving his power by his skilful co-operation with other commanders no less than he had done when the yea and the nay and the initiative rested with himself. Having promptly relegated the siege as it were to the catalogue of ordinary duties ordinarily done, and repaired the railway and the telegraph, Major-General Baden-Powell moved in a north-easterly direction across the Transvaal border, and on 28th May, with Colonels Mahon and Plumer, occupied Zeerust. Early in June, with a force of about eight hundred men, he was busily engaged in arresting rebels, repressing the looting propensities of the natives, and restoring order generally.

On 4th June he was at Ottoshoop. Ten days afterwards he had penetrated farther into Transvaal territory and occupied Rustenburg. In the *London Gazette* of 15th June it was intimated that the Queen had appointed him a Lieutenant-General on the Staff "whilst employed with Her Majesty's forces in South Africa." He was also made a C.B. On the 18th he arrived at Pretoria with a small escort. His meeting with Lord Roberts was looked forward to with eager interest by everyone. The veteran Field-Marshal went out to meet him, but, missing him, returned to the Residency, and the crowds began to disperse. A few moments passed, and then, entering the city by a route different from that expected, the defender of Mafeking made his appearance—"nonchalantly," as the reporters have it—at the head of his escort, "bronzed and full of health and vivacity, and obviously relieved at the unceremoniousness of his reception." Friends and strangers and erstwhile enemies surrounded him in the square near Government House, and hand-shaking and cheering continued till every throat was hoarse. Amidst it all Lord Roberts emerged from the Residency once more, and the notable meeting became a thing of the past. On

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20th June Baden-Powell was back at Rustenburg. He cycled part of the way. Lord Roberts accompanied him to the outskirts of Pretoria.

An entertaining story was being told at this period. It appears that in the early part of June an amateur dramatic company at Port Elizabeth planned a production of "Falka." They sent to Baden-Powell a telegram as follows:—"We stage 'Falka' 12th. Anticipate opera-house besieged. Shall want you badly. Can you come?" Baden-Powell replied: "Regret until run here ended cannot accept other engagements. Wish you all success."

At Rustenburg Baden-Powell was the centre of another siege, which at one time threatened to have very serious results. He left Rustenburg on 4th July, going towards Nylstroom. The eighty men whom he left behind had but one gun, and the Boers thought they had got them in a trap. There appears to have been a great deal of confusion in the orders that reached Rustenburg from headquarters; and the Intelligence Department was apparently gravely at fault.* The hero of Mafeking was back at Rustenburg on 9th July. By the third week in July the outlook had increased in gloom. But Baden-Powell had thrown himself with resourceful vigour into defensive tactics once again, and presently Methuen and Ian Hamilton came to his relief.

On 7th August Lord Roberts telegraphed that the Boer General, Delarey, who had been destroying the railway line between Potchefstroom and Krugersdorp, had heard of Ian Hamilton's advance, and, "seeing he had no chance of capturing Baden-Powell, hurried off to Elands River," where a force under Colonel Hore was on 16th August relieved by Lord Kitchener.

Assuming the offensive once again with renewed prestige—seeing that the men who threatened him at Rustenburg were men who had fought at Spion Kop

* See *Times*, 13th September, 1900.

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and Waggon Hill—Baden-Powell conducted some masterly operations for the purpose of preventing a junction between De Wet and Botha.

On 17th August De Wet reappeared between Rustenburg and Commando's Nek, and called upon Baden-Powell, who was commanding at the Nek, to surrender. "Baden-Powell in his reply to De Wet"—I quote Lord Roberts's dispatch—"derisively asked 'What terms he was prepared to give.'" But "the wily De Wet" gained his object, which was that his messenger should ascertain if the Nek was strongly held. Finding that this was the case, the Boer leader trekked north, Baden-Powell "keeping in touch with him."

When encamped at Waterval on 20th August, Baden-Powell and his force were visited by Lord Roberts. There was a march-past of the men, most of whom had taken part in the defence of Mafeking. "Their splendid soldierly appearance drew warm words of praise from the Commander-in-Chief." On the same day Paget and Baden-Powell were engaged with De Wet. During the whole of the following day Baden-Powell fought Commandant Grobler's rearguard near Warmbaths. Grobler was driven back after severe losses on both sides. About one hundred British prisoners were rescued, and Pienaars River Station was occupied by Baden-Powell, who also captured twenty-five Boers, including a German officer of the Staats Artillery and a Field cornet. Some alarm was occasioned by an unconfirmed report that the General had been wounded.

Baden-Powell succeeded in heading off De Wet, who was at this time pursued by others of our best commanders. And he almost succeeded in capturing him. Reuter's correspondent wrote from Pretoria: "It was practically a race for Warmbaths. By the tactics he adopted Baden-Powell edged De Wet and Grobler westward until they were almost opposite

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Warmbaths. Our advance guard arrived there a few minutes after the Boers. Before the latter had time to prepare for defence they were turned out of the buildings they had occupied. This success was promptly followed up, the Boers fighting a rearguard action and falling back upon a strong nek where they took up a position."

Here followed a characteristic piece of strategy on the part of the Chief. "Baden-Powell made all the signs of bivouacking for the night in front of the enemy's position. But as soon as darkness came on the whole force made a wide turning movement, and daybreak found them sixteen miles in the enemy's rear and holding the railway. The telegraph was tapped, and urgent messages were found to be passing along the wire from De Wet asking for reinforcements. These were answered by Botha, with an assurance that a train was being sent down immediately from Pietersberg with a relief force." Baden-Powell thought to capture that relief force, but his whereabouts becoming known he sought satisfaction by summoning Grobler to surrender. Grobler answered the summons in person, but terms could not be arranged to his liking. De Wet having escaped into dense bush, Baden-Powell, after occupying Nylstroom on 27th August, returned to Pretoria, departing thence for Cape Town on 1st September to see Sir Alfred Milner, the Governor. In November he suffered from an attack of ordinary enteric.

"He is an awfully jolly sort of fellow," a member of the C.I.V. wrote from Warmbaths, in reference to "Mr. B.-P.," and added, "but his notions of how much sleep you want are hazy."

Thousands of greetings from all parts of the world reached General Baden-Powell immediately after Mafeking's relief. An open letter of thanks was the only thing within his power to write, to the end that all might have some acknowledgment of his gratitude

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for the congratulations received. In this, as in his speeches later, the General adhered to the spirit of the words uttered by him at Mafeking in May.* He and those with him had "done what was no more than their duty to their Queen and the prestige of their countrymen." Invitations poured in upon him tendering civic honours and other marks of popular esteem. The Colonies were not behind the Mother Country in showing their admiration. A group of Queensland miners, for example, sent to him a block of pure gold, inscribed: "This is 24-carat—what the Croydon miners take you to be." Continental officers wrote asking if they could serve under him.

Some youthful correspondents are the proud possessors of autograph letters from the General, who, by the way, saw to it that the boys of Mafeking who served as scouts received a medal. The following delightful epistle is dated Rustenburg, 20th August, and was written by General Baden-Powell to a Master Hampden Sanders, a schoolboy at Eastbourne, in reply to a letter written three months previously concerning the defence and relief of Mafeking: "All right, old boy, I will come and stay at Eastbourne when I come home, and we will take some walks together, you and I. You will make a good soldier, I expect, but one thing you must learn before you can be a good soldier, and that is, to be very obedient to your superior officer; that is, while you are a boy, to be obedient to your father, and to your schoolmaster, and to the captain of your cricket or football team, and when you become a real soldier you will know how to obey your officers in every little thing. It is no use being a big or strong soldier unless you are an obedient one. Well, good-bye; I hope I shall see you some day.—Your sincere friend, R. S. BADEN-POWELL."

At an earlier date General Baden-Powell addressed

* See p. 102.

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to a Lancashire boys' league a letter, which cannot be too widely circulated at the present time. Like the epistle just quoted, this communication deserves a place in the history of letters written on the field of battle. The league referred to is the "League of Health and Manliness," in connection with the parish church of Weston-by-Runcorn. This organisation is directed against youthful smoking, and the members guarantee not to indulge in the seductive weed until they are twenty-one at least. In requesting the Chief, as a well-known non-smoker, to accept the position of patron, the seniors of the league mentioned that most of them were past or present members of the choir. General Baden-Powell forwarded the appended letter in reply:—

"*Rustenburg, Transvaal, 23rd July, 1900.*—My dear Boys,—I was very glad indeed to get your kind congratulations on the relief of Mafeking. I am very glad to be elected patron of your club—and I have three reasons for taking special interest in it.

"First—Because I was myself for five years a choir-boy in the Charterhouse Choir.

"Secondly—Because I am not a smoker.

"Thirdly—Because I was partly educated as a boy at Northwich, and used often to go over to Runcorn.

"So you see I feel qualified to take a more than outside interest in your doings. I quite agree with your principles, that it is at your time of life that your habits and character are formed, and remain yours during your manhood. A feeble youth, who smokes because he thinks it is manly, is just as liable to drink or to swear because he has known grown-up men do it—not because it is any pleasure to him—then he gets into the habit of it, and the fault becomes part of him for the rest of his life. The stronger-minded boy thinks a bit for himself—as you in your—or may I say, in our—club do, and keeps himself clear of faults which he recognises are failings in men.

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"Your recognition of the good work being done by the soldiers out here in their devotion to their duty shows that you are looking in the right direction to see what is the proper example of man to follow. And I think that if boys would take the line of always trying to do what is their duty, it would become, in a short time, part of their nature, and would thus guide every action of theirs as men. You who are choir-boys — or past choir-boys — will recognise that if each sings his part in the harmony under the direction of the leader—that is, if each one does his duty—the result is a pleasing anthem, whereas if each sang what he liked best there would be a fine old cats' chorus. So it is in life—if each does his duty in his proper line or profession the whole community moves prosperously and successfully.

"Fellows are very often in doubt as to which of two courses may be the proper one to take, or are tempted to take one line because it is more pleasant or easy than the one which their conscience tells them is the right one. Well, if ever you are in such doubt there is an easy way of deciding, and that is to ask your conscience, 'Which is it my duty to do?' and that will nearly always guide you right. In this way you will soon find that it comes as a habit to do your duty to your leader, whether that be the choirmaster, the head of your department, employer, or officer, or the Queen. And remember always, that in thus doing, conscientiously, your duty to your leader, you are also doing your duty to God. And also remember, that as you lads may often, without knowing it, perhaps, be imitating the examples of men before you, so also, unknown to you, there may be, and probably are, other boys watching you and imitating your example. So let your example to them be always a good one.

"In this way the whole of England's boys and men will in a short time be what the best of them now are,

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viz., a lot living honourably up to what their conscience tells them is their duty.

"Wishing the club every success, I am, yours truly,
"R. S. BADEN-POWELL."

In connection with the foregoing — choir-boys obviously suggesting churches — it is worthy of note that General Baden-Powell was among those who supported the appeal of the Mayor of Mafeking for funds to build a new church in the now historic town as a memorial to those who lost their lives during the siege.

General Baden-Powell entered Cape Town at an early hour on 7th September. But the citizens were up before the train arrived at the terminus. The streets were filled with cheering crowds. At the railway station M.P.'s and leading burghers assembled. Ringing cries of "For he's a jolly good fellow!" drowned the voice of the Mayor as he tendered to Mafeking's defender a formal welcome. The National Anthem was sung, and Baden-Powell was seized and carried to Government House, half a mile distant. He afterwards said, "It was the first time he had been frog-marched." He related with infinite humour how a tall man carried his feet and a short man his head, and how much obliged he was to another over-enthusiastic supporter who "caught hold of his pockets and saved his money for him."

The scenes of enthusiasm culminated on 12th September—a day which was set apart by the municipality in the General's honour. The demonstrations were magnificent. The city gave itself unreservedly to them. At night thirty thousand people promenaded the streets, and disguised by a false beard—mindful of the terrors of popularity—Baden-Powell participated in the fun to the enjoyment of which the populace had given itself up for the time being.

The Chief's next notable work was the organisation

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of the South African Constabulary, a force six thousand strong, which he began to get together in October, 1900, and commanded till 1903. It is said that one morning Lord Kitchener sent for him, and, without any preliminary remarks observed, "You are the man who saw something humorous in the siege of Mafeking?" Baden-Powell smiled. "Now take command of the Constabulary, and when you have seen the material you will have to lick into shape, see if you can find a joke in that."

Baden-Powell smiled, bowed, and left the room, and it was not long before he contrived to find in it the joke for which he was sent in search.

Before the year was out he had added to the list of books bearing his name one on "Sport in War." On the work accomplished in connection with the South African Constabulary this is not the place to dwell. But there are some letters written by the Chief whilst he was engaged in it, one of which may be quoted. The following was sent in reply to the question as to what he would do "were he a young man again":—

Johannesburg, 18th August, 1902.—Dear Sir,—
You ask me, "What I would do if I were a young man again." If I had to begin over again I don't think I should materially change my course. I should still carry out the same principles of life as far as possible, viz.—Sink personal ambition; be prepared to take such place as duty directs; and be happy (for "cheeriness is next to Godliness," where it helps others to carry their burdens). Personal ambition is so apt to give you either a "swelled head" or a soured mind according as it is fulfilled or foiled. I used once to have personal ambition—my ambition was to be an engine-driver; it was foiled, and I've been a disappointed man ever since.—
Yours very truly, R. S. BADEN-POWELL.

CHAPTER XIV

A Busy Year in England and America—The Chief Scout in Cardiff—Attack on "Gladiatorial" Sport—"Sketches in Mafeking" and "Scouting for Boys"—Retirement from the Army.

ON the evening of Saturday, 7th March, 1903, Major-General Baden-Powell returned to London to take up the duties of Inspector-General of Cavalry. Refusing to be interviewed he spent the week-end very quietly at Princes Gate, where the family had removed from St. George's Place, and where he was much interested (and doubtless amused) by his sister's collection of all the souvenirs and mementoes of the famous siege, a collection soon to be rivalled by the host of presentations made to him personally by admirers all over the Empire.

The year was a busy one. In addition to giving evidence before the War Commission, and presenting war medals to men of his old regiment, the 13th Hussars, and others, and attending any number of special functions, he visited the United States, studying American cavalry methods and tactics, and going over the battlefields of the war between North and South. He travelled incognito as "Colonel R. Stephenson," thus circumventing the American interviewer as successfully as he kept at bay the Boers around Mafeking. In New York in particular, owing to a long series of rogueries by self-styled officers of this denomination, "Colonels" are suspect. The result was, that those who most wanted to interview "the hero of Mafeking" were led to doubt his identity.

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Amongst other honours bestowed upon the Chief on his return from the States was the Freedom of Cardiff. Special interest attaches to this presentation. His grandfather, Admiral Smyth, lived in Cardiff up to 1840, and had sole supervision of the Marquis of Bute's maritime and mineral properties in that locality. Admiral Smyth advised the second Marquis to construct the first dock in Cardiff—the West Dock—which was opened in October, 1839. Robert Stephenson, Sir Robert's godfather, was consulted by Lord Bute in connection with this and similar work. Then Cardiff was for some years the home of the Chief's mother. Further points of interest were disclosed in the speech made by Sir Robert in acknowledging the Freedom. "I wish," he said, "I were a better Welshman; and I wish it now more than ever, because, I am sorry to say, although I am by descent a Welshman, I have not learnt the language, and the consequence is I cannot even translate my own motto, which is 'Ar nad yw pwyll pyd ydyw.' (Laughter and cheers.) But I have not been able to find anybody else who could. (Renewed laughter.) There are various translations offered to me by my friends, some very pleasing, and the others a little too opprobrious. (Renewed laughter.) But I think they mean well. (Hear, hear.) I have also been inundated since I have been here with poems on all subjects, I believe, but they are all written in a language I do not understand, but I am sure of this, that if I had a little more of the Welsh in me, and a little less of the Sassenach tongue, I would be able to express to you more fully what I feel to-day—the deepest gratitude towards you all. (Cheers.)"

When Sir Robert was being driven through Adam Street on his way to the Roath Railway Station, accompanied by the Mayor, and escorted by mounted police, an unwashed coal-trimmer eluded the police

* *South Wales Daily News*, 1st June, 1903.

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and mounted the step of the carriage. The man, after shaking hands with the General, and being carried a distance of about fifty yards, was hauled into the roadway by the police.

Later in the year Mrs. H. G. Baden-Powell presented to the Cardiff Free Library twenty-seven water-colour sketches of Cardiff, made by her when staying there in 1840.

During his term of service as Inspector-General of Cavalry, which extended to 1907, Sir Robert was "preparing" for the great social work which promises to be his greatest title to fame. A sportsman in the very best sense of the word he has been always; but he has always deprecated what has been called the "gladiatorial system"—huge crowds of people, who themselves never take part in games, taking an absorbing interest in games played for their amusement by champions. Witness the following, written to a correspondent in 1906:—

"Horse Guards, Whitehall, S.W., 24th April, 1906.

"SIR,—In reply to your questions:—

"1. I do not, in the abstract, see any harm in young men going to look on at football matches on Saturday afternoons. But I do see great harm to themselves and to the nation in their paying other people to play their games for them, and in going in big drinking parties to have a gamble on a match on days when they should be working.

"2. I am the last to object to good, healthy English games played for the good of the players, but I do not like to see us gradually becoming a nation of onlookers at games, like the Romans had become immediately before their Empire fell to pieces.

"As a nation we now spend more time in looking on at races, football, cricket, &c., and we have more unemployed and loafers, in every walk of life, than any other country.

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"Though I am myself very fond of sport, in almost every form, I quite realise that in many quarters, in all ranks of society in Great Britain, the importance of sport and games is becoming unduly exaggerated ; it is carried to an excess at the expense of solid work.—Yours faithfully,

(Signed)

R. S. S. BADEN-POWELL."

It has been said that if Sir Robert had not been a soldier he would have made an accomplished artist. Colour is lent to this theory by his "Sketches in Mafeking and East Africa,"* a handsome volume of sketches and notes made during the days of storm and stress ; and later, in 1906, when he accompanied the Duke and Duchess of Connaught on a three months' trip round South Africa, Rhodesia, and East Africa, which included visits to the grave of Cecil Rhodes in the Matopo Hills, the wonderful Falls of the Zambesi, and the banks of the Albert Nyanza.

About one quarter of this volume is taken up with notes and sketches of Mafeking and recollections of the "so-called" siege, which, by the way, he does not attempt to describe in any detail. But he gives a vivid idea of the daily life of the beleaguered garrison. One illustration is of a favourite diversion of the native children. Whilst warfare in grim earnest was going on around them, "they built little earthworks within range of each other, with loopholes, &c., complete, and then flicked pellets of mud at each other from the end of whippy canes."

Here is a characteristic passage :—"It is more than interesting to see again in peace the spots which bring so many memories of war. To a traveller visiting the land for the first time the little signs which catch the eye mean nothing. But to those who know, the earthen mounds along the line mark the foundations of blockhouses since removed ; here

* Smith, Elder, 1907.

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and there parts of the wire entanglement still stand, with their old meat-tins hanging to ring the alarm when stumbled on at night; a broken girder in the spruit shows where a culvert had been destroyed; hundreds of blackened, rusted tins at one spot show where at one time you might have waded ankle-deep in jam when De Wet blew up a supply train; and in this hollow one can in memory see again the wrecked hospital train, and the grave close by with its cross extemporised out of two compartment doors taken from the train."

Promoted Lieutenant-General in 1907, in which year he exhibited sculpture at the Royal Academy, Sir Robert was, in 1908, allotted the command of the Northumbrian Territorial Division. In 1908 he published the book, "Scouting for Boys," which inspired the Boy Scout movement, and has enjoyed a popularity no less world-wide than "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes." In October, 1909, he was received at Balmoral by King Edward VII., who conferred on him the honour of Knighthood, and invested him with the insignia of a Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order. In May, 1910, he retired from the Army, being placed on retired pay, for the purpose of devoting himself entirely to the furtherance of the Boy Scout movement.

CHAPTER XV

How the Great Peace Army Grew—King Edward's Sympathy
—King George and "The Capture of Windsor Castle"—
Prince Edward as Chief Boy Scout for Wales.

BEFORE a crowded London audience, at the close of the great Boer War, Lord Rosebery delivered an eloquent address on Civic Imperialism. "You are," he said, "going to welcome your brothers and your sons home from the battlefield, but there are battlefields in London as well as in South Africa. The war here is more strenuous, because it is eternal. You may put an end to your South African war, you may make peace with your enemy there; but in London you have a war which you will not end with your lives, for your enemies are longer-lived than you are. You have to fight the ignorance, the apathy, the vices, the corruption, aye, and the crime of London. Are these battles not worth the winning?"

It was to organise the forces for victory in these battles, not in London alone, but throughout the Empire, that the Boy Scout movement was started by the Chief; and, as Mr. G. Whitelaw cleverly indicated in a cartoon published in the *Glasgow Evening News*, it was for this that "Edward the Peacemaker" bestowed the honour of knighthood upon him. And I feel sure that Sir Robert thinks far more of the success of this world-wide movement than of anything he did in Mafeking. One day the nation will think likewise. It will then look back and see prescience also in Mr. Bernard Partridge's cartoon in *Punch*: "Our Youngest Line of Defence," in

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which the Boy Scout says to Mrs. Britannia, "Fear not, Gran'ma; no danger can befall you now. Remember, I am with you." For many years the danger to the life of the nation has been from within; and every Boy Scout, taking his position seriously, is doing something towards making the name of Briton greater in the future than it has been in the past.

Let us now glance briefly at the origin and progress of the movement.

The Chief's "Aids to Scouting" was written to demonstrate the value of scouting to the young soldier under training. But the hints it contains were quickly taken up by schools and clubs in various parts of the kingdom. Ruskin says somewhere that the greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world is to see something and tell what it saw in a plain way. How immensely difficult a thing this is to do has been demonstrated again and again by some of the greatest philosophers. Then, as Ruskin went on to say, "hundreds of people can talk for one who can think." And, again, "thousands can think for one who can see."

Well, "Aids to Scouting" has taught many in addition to the young soldiers for whom it was written to see, to describe, and to think; in a word, to use to advantage the gifts with which they are endowed by nature.

In his young days at the old Charterhouse the Chief came into pretty close touch with the London boy. Has he not told us how, on occasion, he boxed with the youth of Smithfield market? In the intervals of his service abroad, he was amongst the first to see the bearing of what has in recent years come to be regarded as "The Problem of the Boy," the problem, that is, of the future of our homeland, which is in the hands of that boy.

It has been estimated that there were in the United

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SWAPPING YARNS ROUND THE CAMP FIRE.

Illustration by



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Kingdom between three and four million boys, of whom by far the greater number were independent of good influences, and drifting towards "hooliganism" or bad citizenship, for want (until the Boy Scout movement was started) of hands to guide them into the right way, the way of being useful.

By way of "preparing," the Chief in 1907 personally organised an experimental camp on Brownsea Island, in Dorset. Here he taught a small number of boys the joys of open-air life, the charms of woodcraft, the delight of being able to "see" things which heretofore had escaped them—the things he himself was taught to see, when as a boy he was given the freedom of the Kentish woods and hills. Other camps followed, and so successful were they that he was encouraged to take up his pen and write for boys a book on lines somewhat similar to those followed in his book for the young soldier. This new book, "Scouting for Boys," was first published in fortnightly parts between January and March, 1908. In the following May the work appeared in volume form; and by April, 1909, it had run through seven impressions. A second and revised edition was published in June, 1909, and in less than seven months a third impression was called for. In July, 1910, a third and enlarged edition became necessary, and of this edition, which is dedicated by permission to T.R.U. the Prince of Wales and Prince Albert, several impressions have been published. Moreover, the book has been translated into the Danish, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Russian, and Swedish languages.

It is significant that, on the appearance of the initial part of "Scouting for Boys," London, the central battleground of the movement, responded with a "first troop" of Boy Scouts. This troop was formed at Hampstead by Mr. Colbron Pearse. Within a month a second troop was started at Putney. Within four months, the movement had developed so

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rapidly that it was strong enough to support a journal of its own, *The Scout*, to be followed soon by a *Headquarters Gazette* for Scoutmasters. Ere two more months had passed some eighty thousand boys had been enrolled.

It speaks volumes for the care with which the Chief drew up his scheme, that it has stood so well the strain of a success for which he himself was hardly "prepared." It was his idea, originally, to inspire a new order of chivalry combined with woodcraft that could be adopted by existing bodies such as the Boys' Brigade. But boys at large took the matter into their own hands. Here, they saw, was a new "game," which "all could play at." Patrols sprang up everywhere in isolated groups.

To meet this condition of things, and to prevent the movement from ending in chaos, a plan for local committees and councils was drawn up, the outcome of which was the formation of a Governing Council for south-west London. Kindred steps were taken on behalf of other parts of the kingdom and the Colonies, for in every colony and dependency of the Empire the movement took quick and certain root, while exchange visits have since taken place between the Boy Scouts of Britain and those of other parts of Europe. Meanwhile, the old headquarters in Henrietta Street, with its office staff of two, was superseded by a suite of six rooms at 116 Victoria Street, S.W., and a staff of eight. Three months later the number of rooms had increased to twelve, and that of the staff to twelve. After a lapse of another three months further accommodation had to be provided, and the staff had swollen to twenty-six. To-day there is an Advisory Council which includes, among a host of influential men, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of York, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, Lord Rosebery, Lord Strathcona, Lord Kitchener, Earl Grey, Dr.

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Jowett, Rev. C. Silvester Horne, Sir John Kirk, Sir Vezey Strong, P.C., the Headmaster of Eton, and the Bishops of Kensington and Ripon; whilst the Headquarters Staff includes, in addition to the Chief, a Chief Commissioner, a Deputy Chief Commissioner, a Commissioner for the Colonies, a Quartermaster, a Department dealing with kindred organisations, and quite a number of other officials. And thanks to the enterprise of the London *Daily Telegraph* in the summer of 1910, the Chief was assured of £4000 a year for three years to establish the Headquarters on a permanent basis.

Most of the eminent men just named rallied to the support of the Chief at the outset. We have seen how King Edward regarded the movement, when in October, 1909, he conferred a knighthood upon the founder. On the occasion of the great rally of fourteen thousand Boy Scouts at the Crystal Palace on the 4th of September, 1909, His Majesty sent to the boys the following gracious message:—

The King is pleased to know that the Boy Scouts are holding their first parade.

Please assure the boys that the King takes the greatest interest in them, and tell them that if he should call upon them in later life, the sense of patriotic responsibility and habits of discipline which they are now acquiring as boys will enable them to do their duty as men should any danger threaten the Empire.

One of King Edward's last acts was to discuss with the Chief the details of a review of Boy Scouts in Windsor Great Park. This review was fixed for 18th June, 1910. On 5th May Sir Robert was at Buckingham Palace receiving through the Equerry His Majesty's commands. The next day the King was dead. To his illustrious son and successor, King George V., who in July, 1910, became their Patron and supporter, the Boy Scouts have transferred their allegiance and reverent affection.

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On the occasion of the Coronation processions thousands of Boy Scouts rendered signal service as guides and in ambulance work ; but the great day of the movement came on 4th July, 1911, when between 30,000 and 40,000 of the first and second classes were reviewed in Windsor Great Park by the King. His Majesty was accompanied by the Queen, the Prince of Wales, Princess Mary, the Duke of Connaught, Prince and Princess Christian, Prince Alexander of Teck, Lord Roberts, Lord Grenfell, and others of note. Prince George and Prince John took an isolated but evidently keen interest in the proceedings ; and the onlookers must have equalled the Scouts themselves in number.

The Chief was in command of the Rally, the representative character of which will be realised when it is stated that there were present Scouts from Canada, and detachments not only from all the counties in England, but also from Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Malta, and Gibraltar.

A large number arrived at Windsor overnight and camped in the park by Queen Anne's Ride ; and fresh arrivals came with the dawn and followed until shortly before the review, which began at three o'clock in the afternoon.

One incident of the morning deserves passing note. Some 200 Scouts arrived from Essex at about eight o'clock, and desiring to make the most of their opportunities, dispatched a couple of patrol leaders to the Castle with a request that they might be permitted to see the famous South and East Terraces before reporting themselves at the camp. Permission was at once given ; and a few minutes later the boys were feasting their eyes on the glorious prospects which open out over the Park and the Berkshire woodlands.

By two o'clock the troops had been drawn up in eight divisions, the whole forming three semicircles,

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with a space between each, along which the King and his escort, with the Chief by his side, rode; the Queen and others of the Royal party, together with a number of Indian notables and orderlies, following. In front of the parade were detachments of the King's Scouts, a contingent from overseas, and a party of those who had won distinction as life-savers. The King's Scouts are elder boys who have passed severe tests as guides; and those who have saved life at personal risk do not receive official recognition until searching inquiry has been made by the Chief into the circumstances of each individual act. Whilst the detailed inspection was in progress—it lasted for about one hour—patrols of the first circle piled their staves and gave imitations of camp fire-lighting, and a display of first-aid. No verbal orders were given, the various movements necessary being signalled from an elevated stand not far from the Royal enclosure.

When the inspection was over and the King had taken up his position by the Royal Standard, the "Circular Rally" provided one of the finest spectacles imaginable. The signal having been given, the boys broke into a forward run, each troop uttering its patrol call, and waving its staves in the air. Then, as the inner ring of King's Scouts was reached, the boys came to a simultaneous halt, in admirable formation. Dead silence reigned for a moment or two; and then arose the strains of Rubens' "Boys, be prepared," and the famous "Ingonyama" chorus, to the music of the band of the Middlesex Regiment. Next the King's Scouts and the life-savers marched past before His Majesty and saluted. Then came the presentation of medals by the Chief Scout to two Canadian Scouts—Francis Philip Galbraith and Donald Chadsey—who had travelled 6000 miles to be present. These two lads, with others, had tracked through the woods a man accused of shoot-

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ing a chief of police, and watched his hiding-place until his capture was effected. Galbraith and Chadsey were elected by their companions to attend the Review, and they were able to take back with them a special word of commendation from the King.

After the King had personally expressed to Sir Robert Baden-Powell his appreciation of the smart appearance of the boys and of the work they had done, the Chief rode out to the centre of the parade, and, lifting his hat, called for "Three cheers for the King." The Chief led three of the most penetrating cheers ever heard, probably, within the confines of Windsor Great Park or anywhere else—cheers repeated again and again. The Scouts placed their hats upon the tops of their staves, and waved them with an enthusiasm that stirred every onlooker with a feeling that he will never forget. Cheers for the Queen were as heartily given, and as enthusiastically again for the Prince of Wales. There was another demonstration of loyalty as the Royal party left the parade ground for the Castle, whence, after a very brief interval, His Majesty, through his Equerry, Major Clive Wigram, sent to the Chief the following message:—

WINDSOR CASTLE, *4th July, 1911.*

DEAR SIR ROBERT,—I am commanded to inform you that the King was very much pleased to see so many detachments of the Boy Scouts from all parts of the United Kingdom, including some from the over-sea Dominions, at the Rally to-day.

His Majesty welcomes this opportunity of showing his appreciation of the great voluntary work which is being carried out by men and women of all classes, who are striving to further the advance of sound training and education among the rising generation of the Empire. The healthy appearance, as well as the smartness and keenness of the boys, surprised His Majesty.

I am further heartily to congratulate you and your workers on the widespread interest the Boy Scout movement has aroused, and on the remarkable results already achieved. The King

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THE CAPTURE OF WINDSOR CASTLE BY THE BOY SCOUTS, JULY 4, 1911.

(Reproduced by special permission of the Proprietors of "Punch.")

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feels sure that the boys of the Empire will show their gratitude for the encouragement so generously given by the various organisations both at home and abroad, and will endeavour to become God-fearing and useful citizens.—Believe me, yours sincerely,
CLIVE WIGRAM.

It was an inspiration to move amongst the on-lookers and listen to their comments on the boys and the good work that the Boy Scout movement was doing. Before he could leave the ground the Chief was surrounded by friends and admirers who pressed forward with their congratulations. Sir Robert's mount, a fine black charger, one of two presented to him by admirers in New Zealand, came in for almost as much attention as its rider. Indeed, as someone observed, it appeared to have at least two of the qualities of an efficient Scout—alertness and obedience. The King, himself a lover of horses, was specially interested in it.

As soon as he could get away from the crowd, who sang "For he's a jolly good fellow!" a refrain that found an echo throughout the remainder of the day wherever the Chief was seen, Sir Robert rode into the camp to see after the comfort of his young followers. One of the first to be on the move on this memorable day, he was one of the last to relinquish his labours, taking an active part in superintending the entraining at the two railway stations. Some of the Scouts had to be away comparatively early; but they left behind them more than enough to justify the happily inspired cartoon by Mr. Bernard Partridge in *Punch*, representing the "Capture of Windsor Castle." The cartoon was of course completed some days in advance, but anyone in the Royal borough might have imagined it to have been drawn on the spot from personal observation, so accurately does it represent what actually occurred. Never before had the terraces and ramparts of the old Castle swarmed with a crowd of young life;

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and the orderliness of the Scouts was no less noticeable than their quick interest in all that was to be seen. "You have hard work here to-day," said a passer-by to a Windsor police officer. "Oh, these boys don't give any trouble" was the reply. And the sentries behind their normal reserve seemed to beam kindly approval. Most of the boys were in small parties, accompanied by elders who explained to them the history of the Castle, and its many stirring associations. There can have been few who were not moved by their first sight of the interior of St. George's Chapel, and by the comparisons drawn between the old order of chivalry which it represents, the oldest Order of its kind in the world, and the new order of chivalry, the youngest in the world, of which they were members. Around the memorial to Prince Christian Victor, without the Castle walls, many a little group gathered, repeating aloud the inscription, "My duty is to my country." And they were evidently moved in hardly less degree as they poured through the courts and schoolrooms of Eton, and entered the hallowed precincts of the college chapel. It is to be hoped that there was some past or present Wykehamist in their midst to remind them that Winchester was in a way the foster-parent of Eton, for the old Winchester motto, "Manners makyth Man," certainly embodies one of the ideals of the Boy Scouts.

When the Castle and the School had been visited, there were the streets and the "playing fields" to explore and the river to enjoy. In one of the streets I noticed more than one example of a "good turn," a cyclist, half-blinded by something that had flown into one of his eyes, having amongst others to thank a Boy Scout for relief. On the river, which towards evening swarmed with boy life, I witnessed one instance of presence of mind on the part of a little company of Scouts. Their tiny boat was run into

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by a much heavier bark, the rowers in which—they were not Scouts—had mistaken the directions of their cox. The Scouts kept their heads and their boat steady, and danger was happily averted.

One other incident deserves a passing word. On the day after the Rally, as the Prince of Wales and Princess Mary were returning from a ride in Windsor Great Park, they were saluted in the Long Walk by a party of Boy Scouts, part of a number who had been able to stay overnight in camp. The boys belonged to a detachment from Montgomeryshire, and they lined up near the Sovereign's entrance to the Castle. The Prince and his sister stopped, and had quite a long chat with the boys, the Prince inquiring if they had had a good time in camp, and how they got on at the Review. He then wished them a safe return home.

It remains to be added that though, as a result of the great heat, there were a number of cases of faintness, the Rally passed off, and the boys got back to their homes—thanks to the admirable arrangements of the Chief, his staff, the legion of subordinate officials, and the goodwill of the railway staffs—without any untoward event happening to mar the success of the great gathering, which had a pleasant little sequel at Carnarvon, where, on the occasion of his investiture, the Prince of Wales accepted a staff of office as Chief Boy Scout for Wales. Sir Robert Baden-Powell was in attendance.

CHAPTER XVI

How to Become a Scout—The Scout's Promise—Scout Law—
Good Turns—Garter Knights and the Scout Brotherhood—
The Prince of Wales's Speech—Loyalty to the Chief.

IN a sense every boy is a commander, and the training he receives as a Boy Scout teaches him not only obedience to his officers, but how to develop and command his own innate forces—the faculties with which he has been endowed by nature. In a word, he learns self-reliance, and this means that he gains more from life than before, and learns, too, that in helping others he is really helping himself. These are the principles that lie at the root of good citizenship. Cultivating a sound mind in a sound body, the Boy Scout realises the true fulness of life. No longer does he crave blindly after false ideals of manliness. He sees with his new vision that manliness is not to be found in poisoning his body and mind by intoxicating liquors, consuming cigarettes, reading pernicious books, or being otherwise than clean in thought, word, and deed. As he studies the world of nature in the woods and fields, and the movements of the stars, being as much in the open as possible, he acquires insensibly the freedom and the healthfulness of God's world as contrasted with the serfdom and the sordidness of man's world, the world of the city and the slum. Scouting, as conceived by the founder of the movement, is something infinitely beyond the petty idea of soldiering. Certainly it makes use, as Christianity did at the outset, of certain facts and ideas that make for unity

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and order. Apart altogether from considerations of the ends to which the training of a soldier is necessarily directed, the benefit of this training cannot be denied. In the Boy Scout organisation certain forms of drill are essential ; but all suggestions of mere militarism are reduced to a minimum. Military control is adopted only so far as is necessary to the collecting or moving of large numbers, whether of boys or men. It stops short of anything which is calculated to turn the unit into part of a machine. The guiding idea is the training of the individual ; not for military ends, not for selfish ends, but for the ultimate benefit of the community, which rests on the well-being of each individual.

All this, and much more, will be found set out finally and in the most convincing way in the Chief Scout's book, "Scouting for Boys," which may be commended as a source of profit and pleasure to every reader, young and old, whether or not he takes, or intends to take, any active part in the Boy Scout movement. But it may be helpful if I indicate in a few words how a boy may become a Scout, and what he undertakes to do when he is enrolled. The fact that he has a real good time is evident from the wonderful spread of the great Peace Army, which to-day numbers something like three hundred thousand, scattered over the globe, from China to Peru, from the Northern Lights to the Southern Cross, and has been called into being within the short space of between two and three years.

Any boys between the ages of ten and eighteen can become Boy Scouts or Patrol leaders. The "unit" is a Patrol of from six to nine boys. Three or more Patrols form a Troop. The Patrol is trained by a Scoutmaster, who obtains registration and authority from Headquarters, 114-118 Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W. Scoutmasters must be over eighteen. The course of training, which is outlined

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in "Scouting for Boys," takes about six weeks or two months ; and when this is completed, the Boy Scout will begin to pass certain examinations, his success in which will qualify him for the various badges awarded for efficiency in the work of the various grades of craftsmanship. In addition to learning first-aid, swimming, tracking, bridge-building, map-reading, cooking, how to find one's way by the compass and the stars, aeronautics and seamanship, the Boy Scout is encouraged to study thrift and to take up various forms of handicrafts, in which, during the last two years, over 200 badges of efficiency have been issued, with the result that the Board of Trade and other bodies have come to recognise these badges as proof that their holders are qualified for employment in one or other direction.

When the moment comes for enrolment, each boy promises, "on his honour"—(1) To be loyal to God and the King ; (2) To try to do good turns daily to others ; and (3) To obey the Scout Law.

"My idea," says the Chief Scout, alluding to Sunday observance, "is that every Scout should make a point of attending Divine Service on Sunday, either at church, chapel, or on parade ; and that the rest of the day should be devoted to scouting, in the form of 'nature study,' in the fields and woods, if fine, or museums, &c., if wet ; so that scouting may take the place of the usual loafing, which is so largely prevalent throughout the country on Sundays."

As to the second promise, the Chief says : "When you get up in the morning, remember that you have got to do a good turn for someone during the day ; tie a knot in your handkerchief or necktie, and leave the tail of your necktie outside your waistcoat to remind yourself of it ; and when you go to bed at night think whom you did the good turn to. If you should ever find that you had forgotten to do it, you must do two good turns the next day instead."

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How this spirit of helpfulness to others has "caught on" may be judged by the fact that up to the summer of 1911, after the most searching inquiry, 5 bronze and 110 silver crosses and 110 badges for gallantry had been awarded. When you see a Scout with badges or medals on his arm or breast you may rely upon it that they have been well earned. Many examples might be cited. Many more are unknown except to the parties chiefly concerned, for the real Scout "does good by stealth, and blushes to find it fame." One of the finest examples comes to us from New Zealand. I give the story in the Chief's own words. "A little chap got into a canoe and was carried out to sea in a gale. A Boy Scout, watching, got three other boys together and shoved out a boat into the sea to follow the other. They rescued him with the greatest difficulty, for he was just sinking; and tried to make their way back to the land. It seemed impossible, and that their boat would be swamped; but after about two hours they managed to beach their boat somewhere. The boy who initiated the rescue was a cripple on crutches, who knew that if anything happened to the boat he must certainly die. But he thought first of the other chap not of himself."

The Scout Law involves loyalty to the motto, "Be Prepared." The Scout tries to "be prepared" in mind, by having disciplined himself to be obedient to every order, and also by having thought out beforehand any accident that may occur, so that he may know the right thing to do at the right moment, and be willing to do it. He tries to "be prepared" in body by making himself strong and active and able to do the right thing at the right moment and to do it. A Scout's honour is something he will not sacrifice on any account. A Scout is loyal to God, to the King, to his officers, to his parents, to his country, and to his employers. A Scout's duty is to

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be useful and to help others in whatever social station they may be. A Scout is courteous, a friend to animals, and he "smiles and whistles in all circumstances," obeys cheerily and readily, not in a slow, "hang-dog" sort of way; he never grouses at hardships, whines, or uses profane language. And a Scout is thrifty: "that is, he saves every penny he can, and puts it into the bank, so that he may have money to help himself when out of work, and thus not make himself a burden to others, or that he may have money to give away to others when they need it."

As I write, the great need is not for boys to join the movement, but for the right sort of young men to take up work as Scoutmasters; and any who may be moved by what has been written in these pages, or written or said elsewhere, to help forward the splendid ideals set before us by Sir Robert Baden-Powell, should at once put himself into touch by letter, or personally, with Headquarters, where he will be provided at once with all the help and information that he may need. But if he will procure "Scouting for Boys" and master its contents, he will not need much further qualification, save good health and the necessary leisure.

One outcome of the Boy Scout movement that deserves special note is the encouragement it has given to the spread of good books. No Boy Scout need be long in ignorance as to what is helpful and what is harmful in the mass of publications embraced under the title of "Books for Boys."

Since the first half of the fourteenth century, when, in emulation of King Arthur, Edward III. set up a kind of Round Table at Windsor, and by inaugurating a great tournament, sought to attract to his standard the bravest and most chivalrous spirits in Christendom, and instituted for them the Order of the Garter, no more splendid incentive to active

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knight-errantry has been started than that which is involved in the founding of the world-wide Brotherhood of Boy Scouts. As the Chief has written, "The promise which the Scout makes is much like that of the Knight. St. George is the Patron Saint of both brotherhoods, and the little knot on the Scout's badge is to remind him to carry out his duty of doing good turns, just as the Garter is a reminder to the Knight to do his duty as a chivalrous man—that is, honour women and help the weak." And it may well be a source of inspiration to many a young Scout to feel that the latest in the list of the Knights of the Garter, the Prince of Wales, is a member of the Brotherhood. At his investiture at Carnarvon, following his declaration of fealty to his father, the Prince addressed to the assembled citizens these words: "I am very young, but I have a great example before me. I have my dear father and my dear mother, and good friends to help me. And so, bearing in mind our ancient and beautiful saying, 'Without God, without anything; God is enough,' I hope to do my duty to my King, to Wales, and to you all."

A word in closing as to the personal loyalty of the Boy Scouts to their Chief. This can be best expressed in a quotation from an article contributed by Mr. Marcus Woodward to the *Headquarters Gazette*, describing a visit to the Brent Valley Bird Sanctuary. The party travelled by motor-bus, and included Sir Robert.

"Overtaking two running Scouts, a Corporal and a Tenderfoot," writes Mr. Woodward, "we hailed them, thinking to give them a lift. 'Come on board!' we cried. They did not know if we were to be trusted. We were in a pirate bus. They may have thought we were pirates. 'No fear!' came the answer to our invitation from the pavement. But we persuaded them at last to come on board. The

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Corporal ran upstairs, having been told that he would find on top something, somebody—worth a day's march to see. We, who were on the top, said to him, as he arrived, panting, 'Find your General!' But he was in the dark, poor boy, bewildered. He saw only a number of ordinary-looking pirates. Then the General drew his little soldier to his side. He looked at his right arm and at his left arm—you know his way. 'H'm,' said he. 'Cyclist—Corporal—First-Class—Good boy. Well done. Tell me—what are you after?' He was running away from them, he said, and they were trying to find him and catch him. 'Are you not leaving any trail?' said the General, glancing ahead to the open country now lying before us. 'No, sir, they must find me as best they can.' 'It would puzzle even you, sir,' we said; and the General agreed. Wonderful boys are the Scouts.

"Then one of us on a back seat whispered a word to the little Corporal. 'Truly,' it was whispered, 'he is your General—Sir Robert—the Chief Scout.' And then you should have seen the glow that overspread the boy's face! You should have seen how he straightened himself—how his heels came together—how his right hand swang to the full salute. I have seen many fine salutes. I have seen the Prince of Wales, when a little boy, saluting a sentry in Pall Mall. I have seen German soldiers saluting their officers in Berlin. Many fine and proud and splendid salutes have I seen given by men to their Generals, but never a finer, a prouder, a more splendid salute than this of the little Corporal on the top of the motor-bus to the back of our Chief. It was a pity that the Chief's back was turned to the boy. But the Chief has eyes at the back of his head."

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